

#4

JASON PELL • EMILIO UTRERA • JOHN MACLEOD

**BAD  
BUG**  
MIDNIGHT  
MATURE 17+



# FLICKERING LIGHTS





# FLICKERING LIGHTS

WRITTEN BY JASON PELL

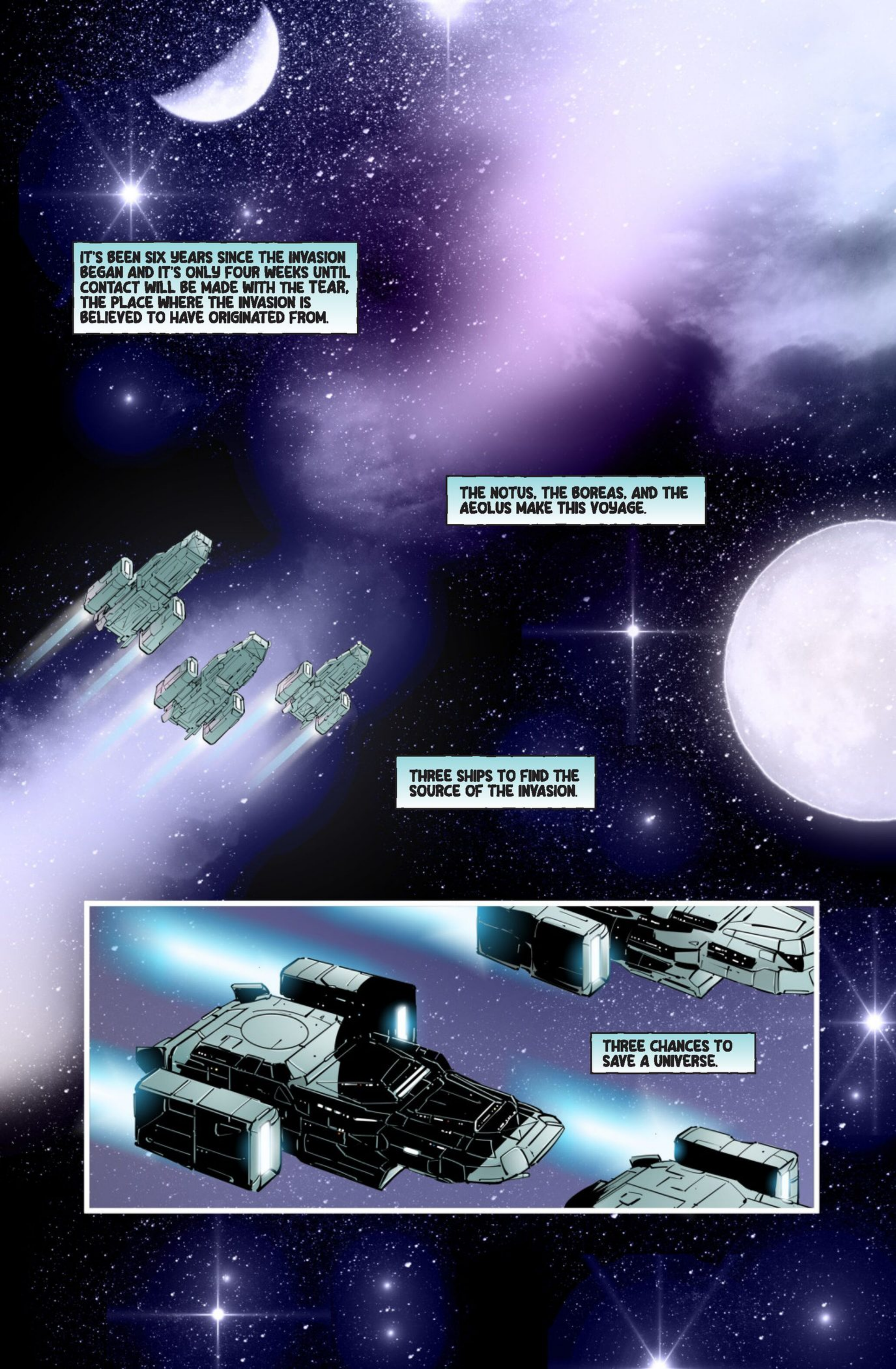
ART BY EMILIO UTREDA

EDITED BY JOHN MACLEOD

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IT'S BEEN SIX YEARS SINCE THE INVASION BEGAN AND IT'S ONLY FOUR WEEKS UNTIL CONTACT WILL BE MADE WITH THE TEAR, THE PLACE WHERE THE INVASION IS BELIEVED TO HAVE ORIGINATED FROM.

THE NOTUS, THE BOREAS, AND THE AEOLUS MAKE THIS VOYAGE.

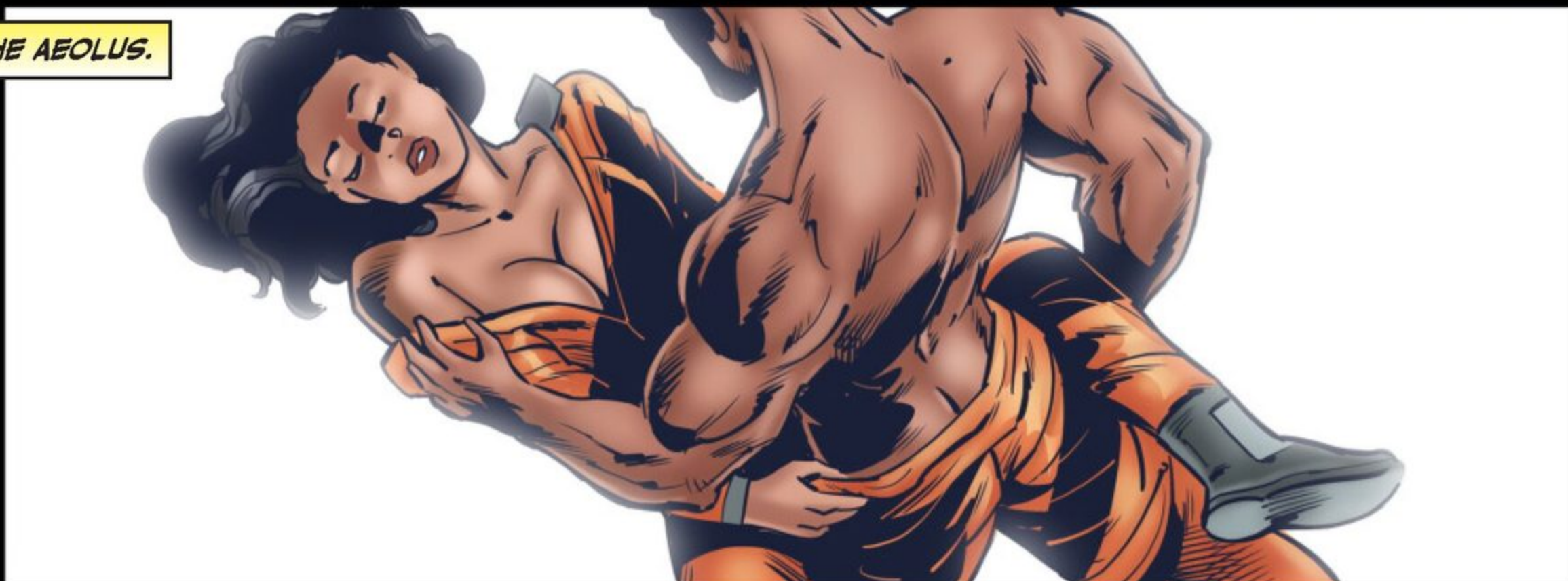
THREE SHIPS TO FIND THE SOURCE OF THE INVASION.



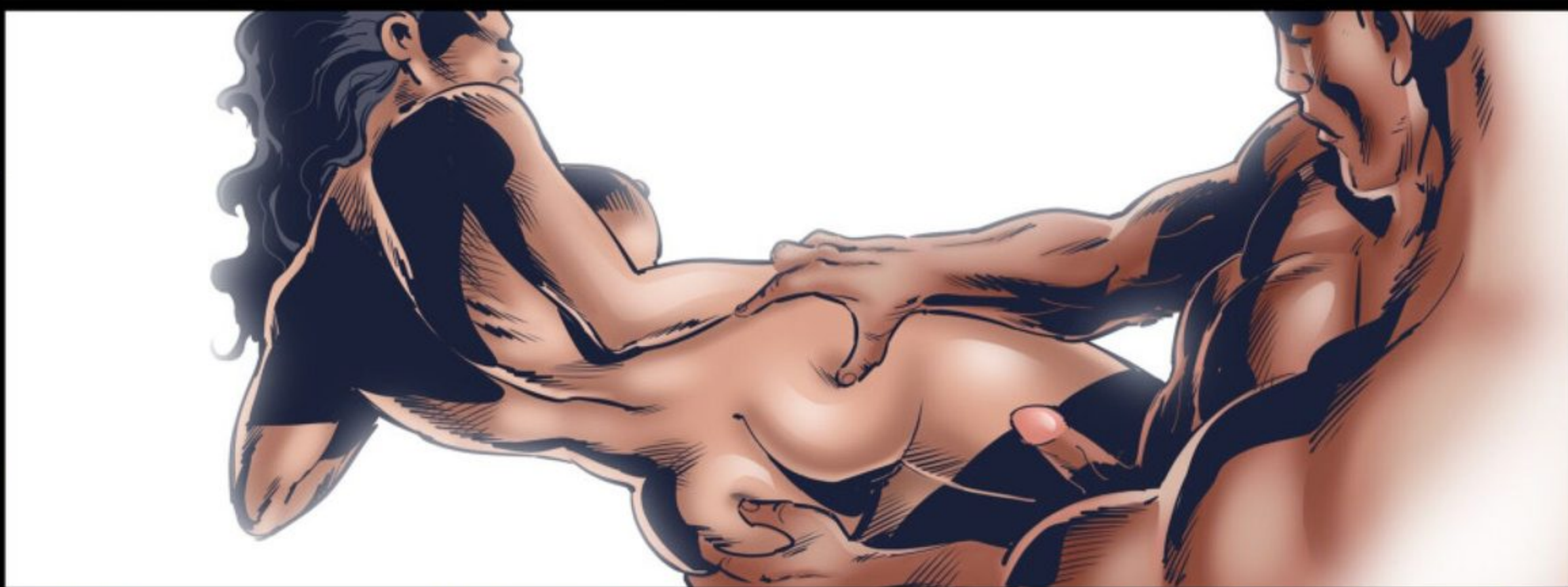
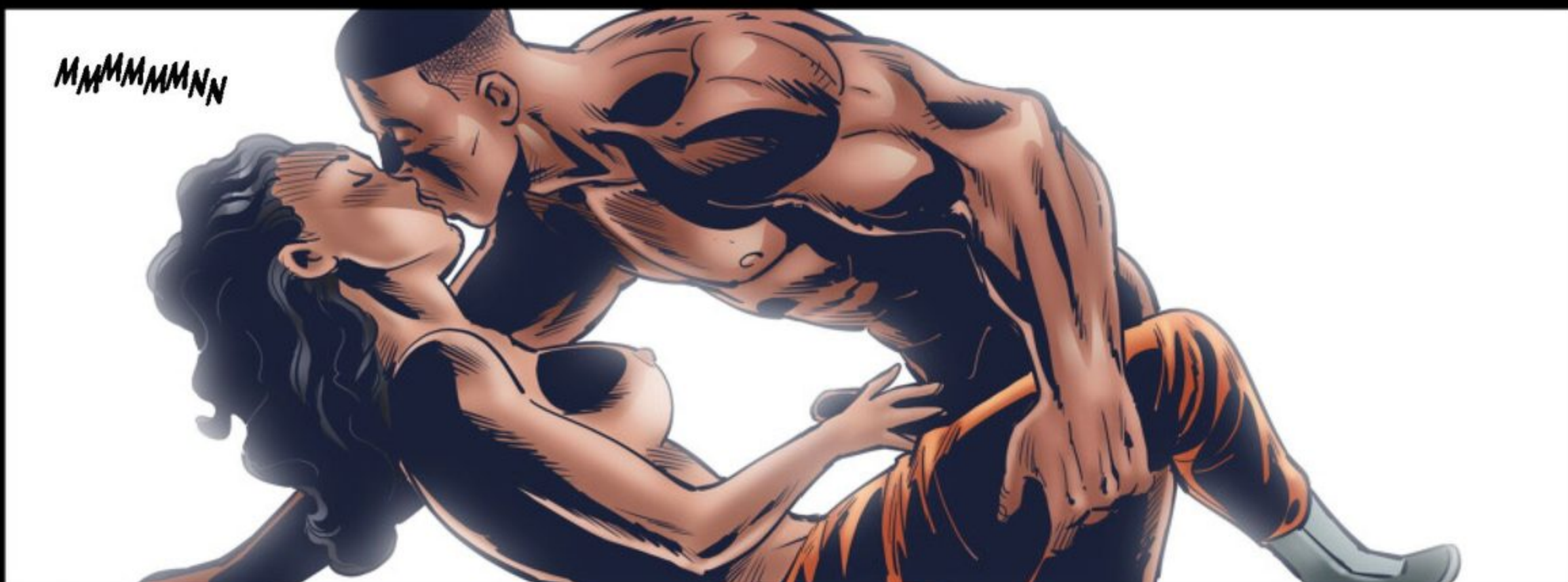
THREE CHANCES TO SAVE A UNIVERSE.



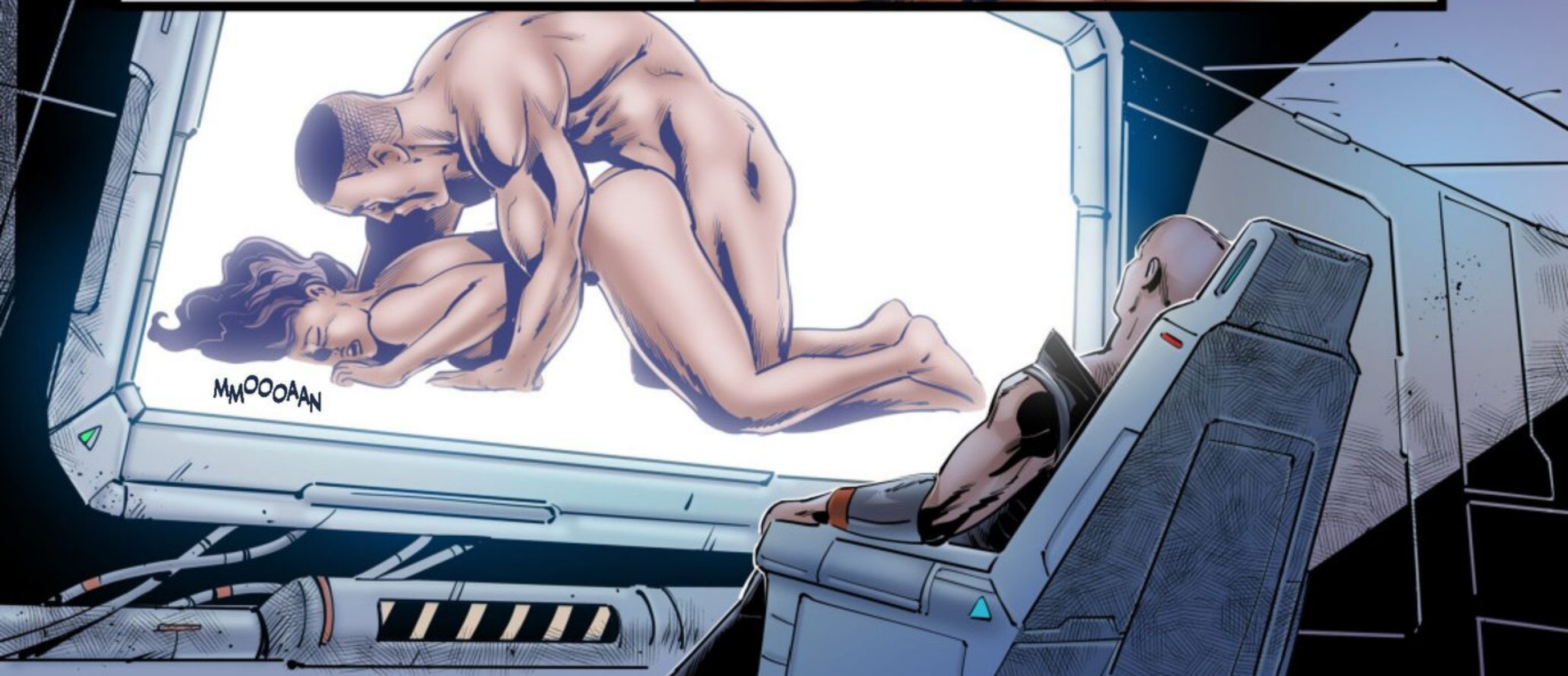
THE AEOLUS.



MMMMMMNN



MMOOOAAAN



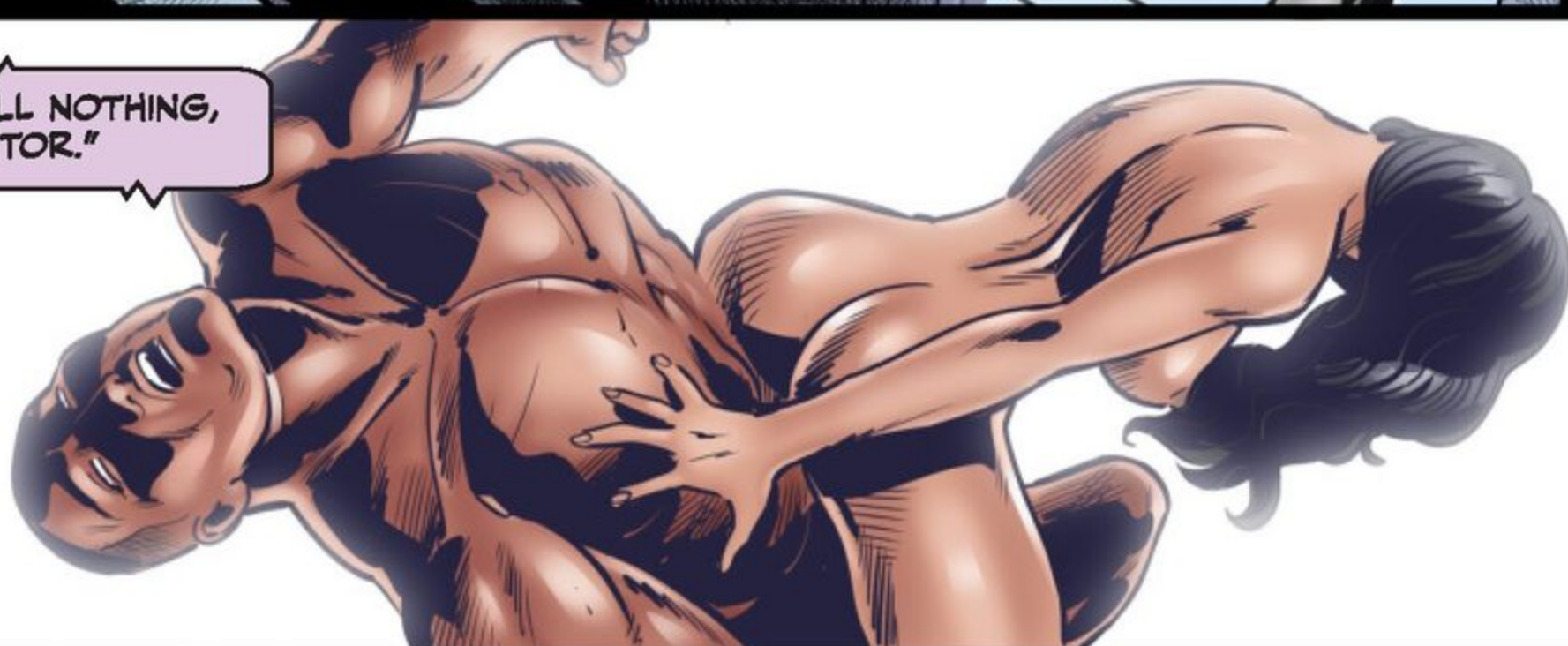




"STILL NO CHANGE WITH  
HIS THE HEARTBEAT?"



"STILL NOTHING,  
DOCTOR."



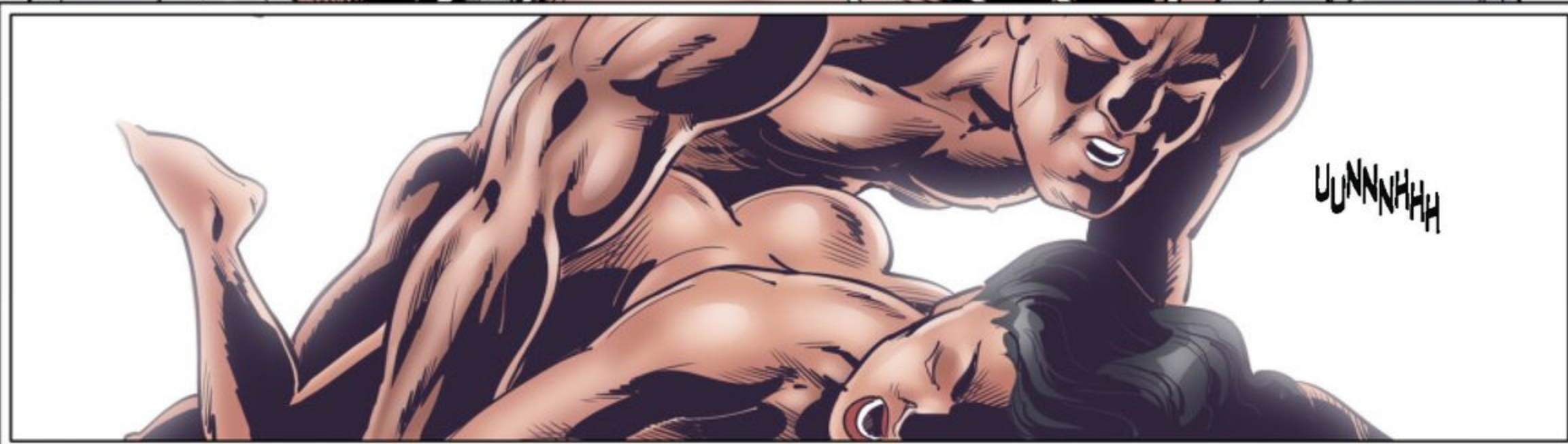
"HIS RATE IS AS STEADY  
AS IT WAS WHEN HE FIRST  
CAME IN."



UNGH!



"HE'S EXCITED AS MUCH  
AS HE WOULD BE WATCHING  
CLOUDS."

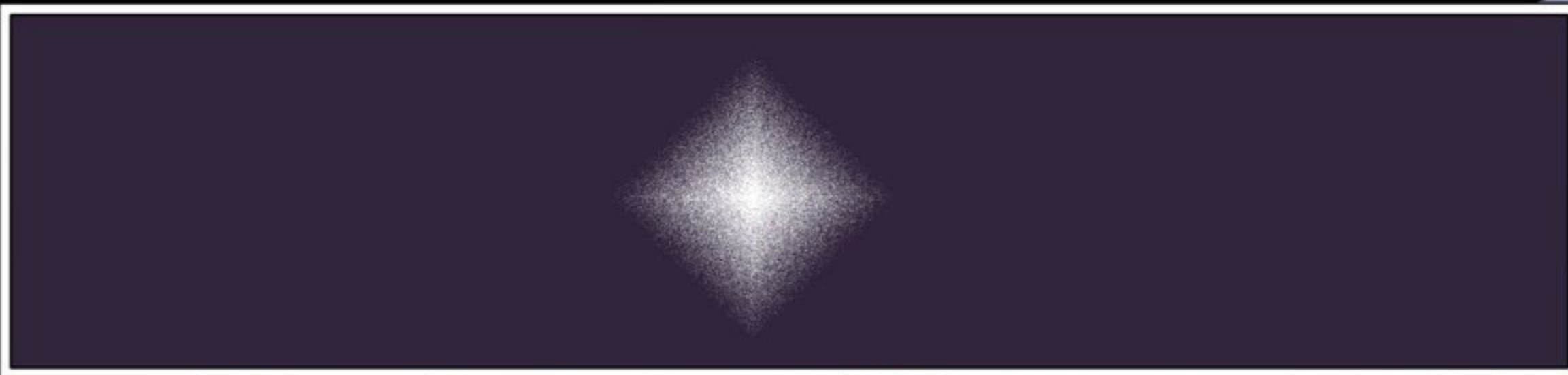


UUNNNHHH



NNNGGGHH!

OOHH!!



AND THAT  
CONCLUDES  
TODAY'S SESSION,  
SAMUEL.

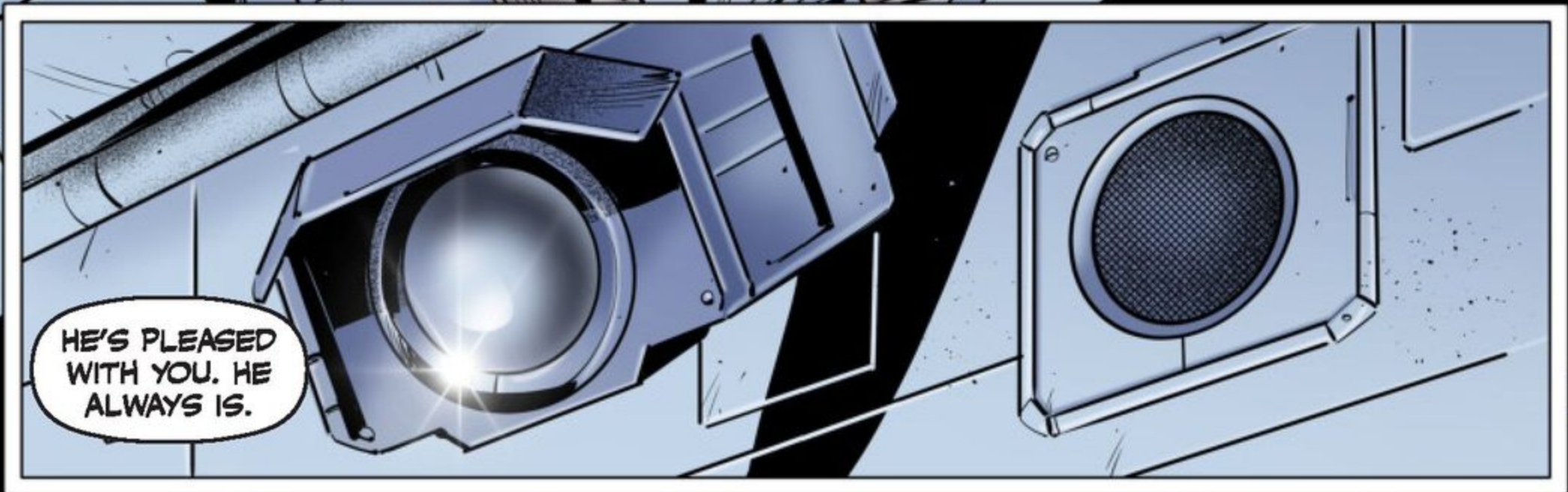




HOW DID I DO?

YOU DID WELL.

AND WHAT DOES DOCTOR FORTNER THINK?



HE'S PLEASED WITH YOU. HE ALWAYS IS.



WILL HE SPEAK WITH ME TODAY?

HE *TRULY* WISHES THAT HE COULD, BUT THE DOCTOR IS A BUSY MAN, I'M SURE HE'S ALREADY ONTO ANOTHER IMPORTANT TASK.

YOU'RE FREE TO GO, SAMUEL.



SAMUEL. THE NAME DOESN'T MATTER, BUT HE RECOGNIZES ITS NEED. ALL THINGS HAVE NAMES.

THEY REFER TO HIM AS "HE" SINCE HE SHARES MORE TRAITS WITH THAT SEX THAN THE OTHER. AGAIN, HE DOESN'T CARE.





THEY FINISHED  
RUNNING YOU  
THROUGH ANOTHER  
GAUNTLET?

HELLO, PAGE.  
ANOTHER TEST,  
YES, AND DOCTOR  
TINTSO SAYS I'M  
STILL PASSING.



I'M SURE  
YOU'RE GLAD TO  
BE DONE FOR  
THE WEEK.

MY OPINION IS  
IRRELEVANT. THERE'S  
A NEED TO MAKE SURE  
THAT I'M STILL FREE FROM  
DESIRE BEFORE WE  
REACH THE TEAR.



I GUESS  
AS LONG AS  
YOU'RE OK  
WITH IT.

YOU...YOU  
ARE THE ONLY  
ONE THAT ASKS  
ABOUT ME.



WHY?

I DON'T LIKE  
THE IDEA OF ANYONE  
BEING A LAB RAT.  
EVEN ONE BORN  
IN A LAB.

YOU MIGHT BE  
OUR BEST CHANCE  
AT UNDERSTANDING  
THE INVADERS. STILL...  
THEY SHOULD TREAT  
YOU RIGHT.



...

THANK  
YOU, PAGE.



THE BOREAS.

IT'S CALLED  
*THE SIGHING HEART*.  
IT'S A RECREATION...  
BUT AN AMAZING  
ONE.

IT WAS  
INSPIRED BY AN OLD  
*GHOST STORY* ABOUT A  
HAUNTED APARTMENT  
BUILDING.

DO YOU  
LIKE IT,  
EDUARDO?

Y-YES.

DOES  
IT EXCITE  
YOU?

WHAT?

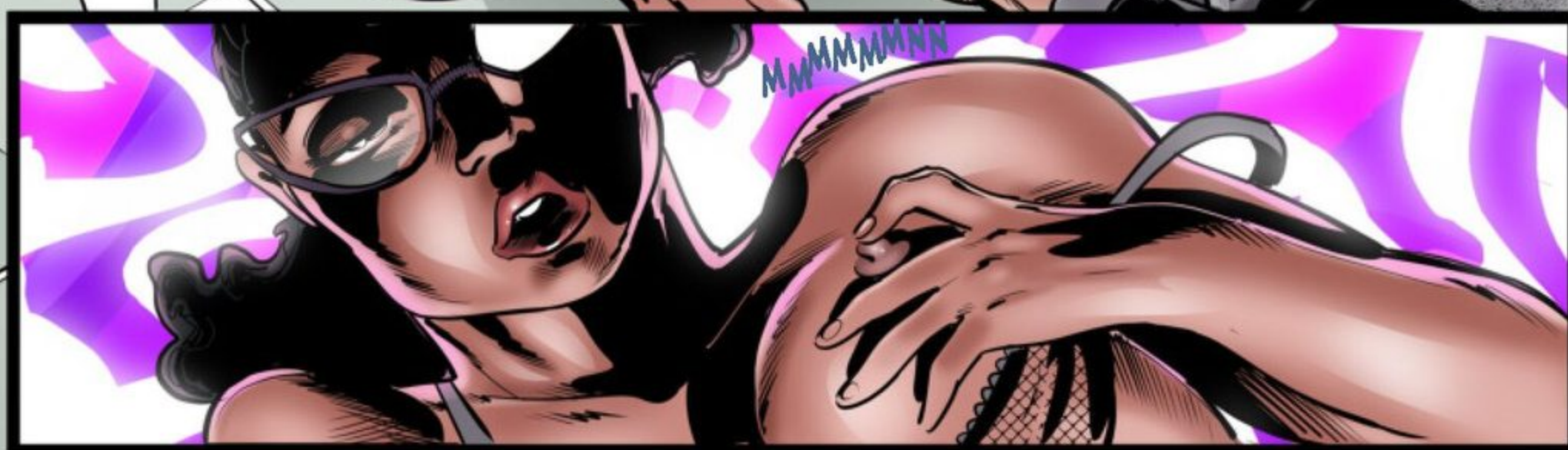
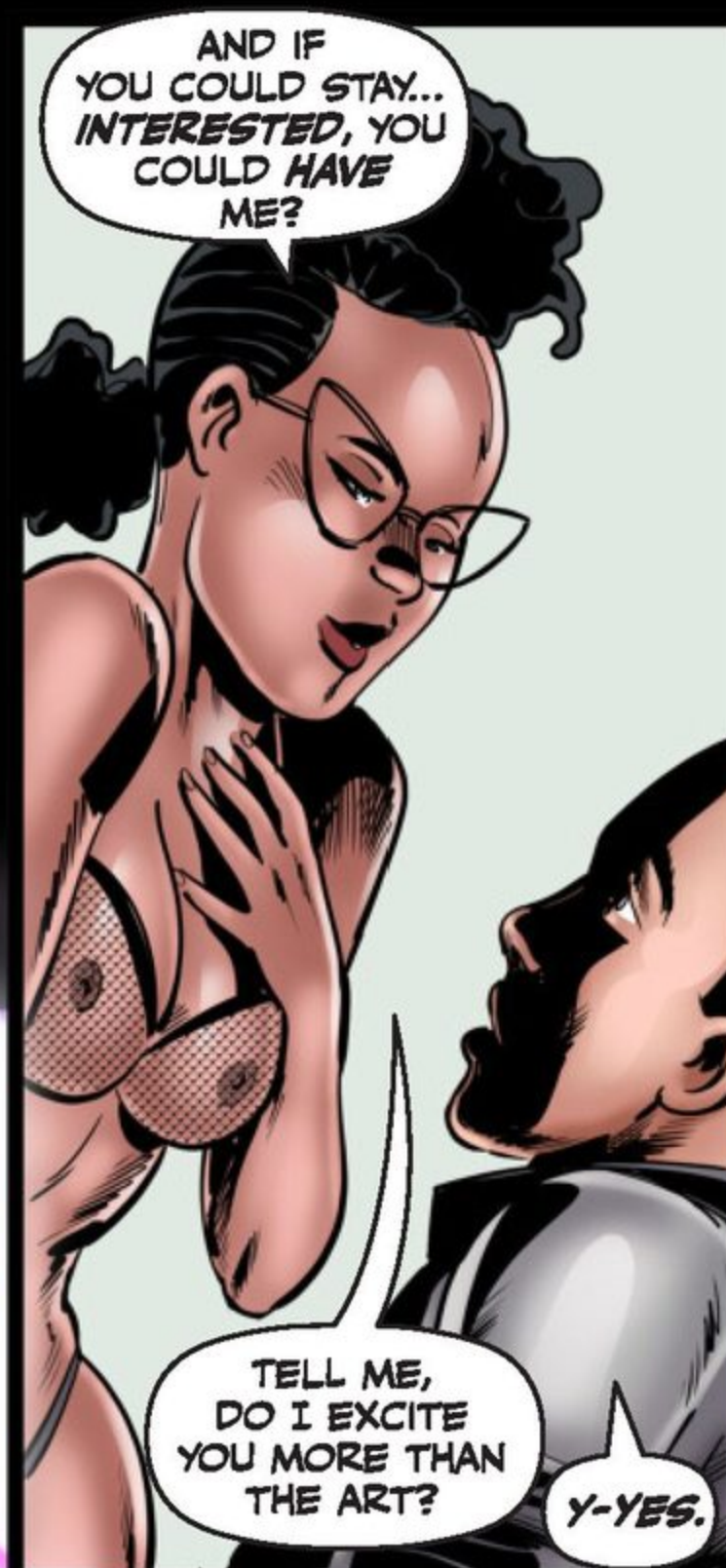
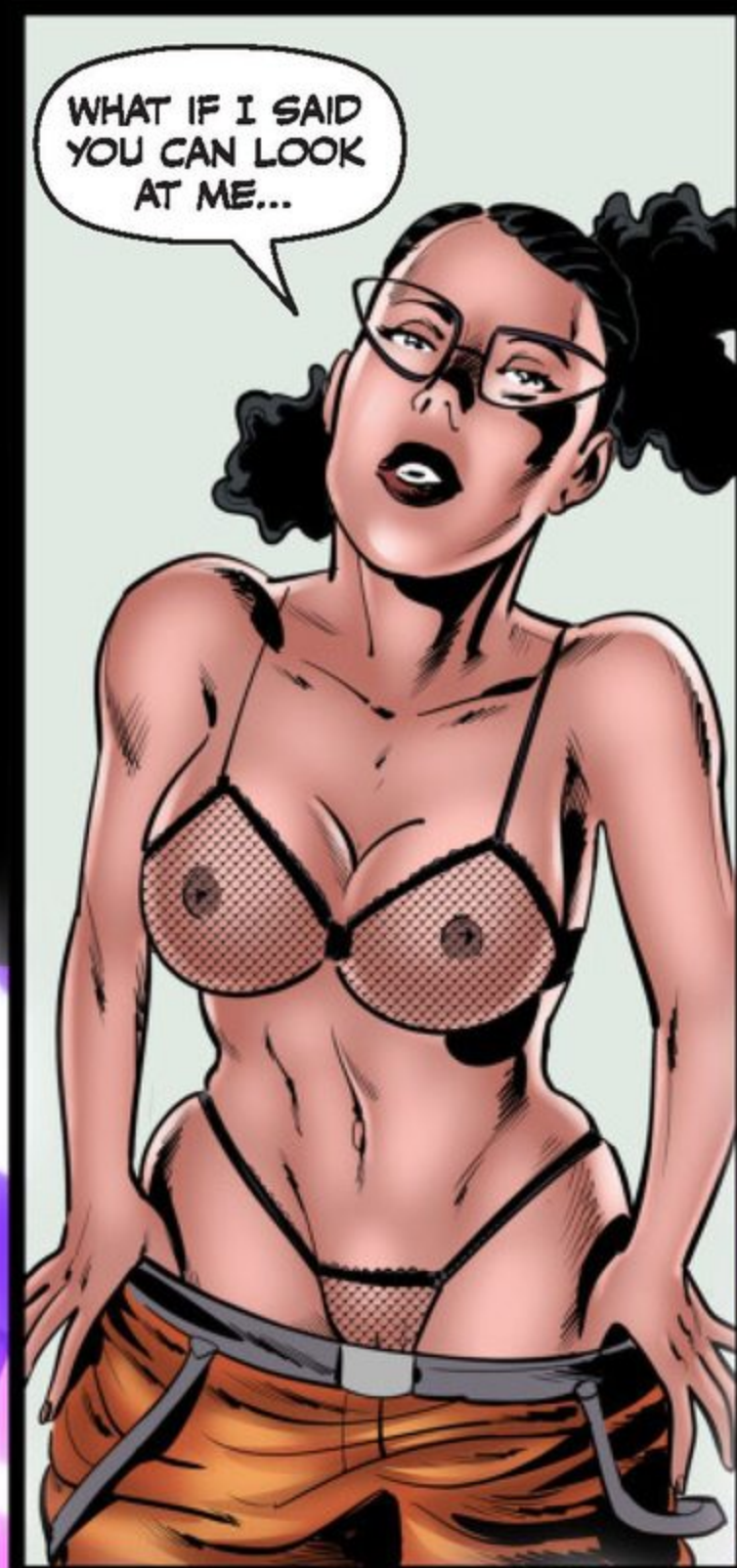
...WHY DID  
YOU INVITE ME HERE,  
DOCTOR MORA? I DON'T  
UNDERSTAND. WE'VE  
BARELY SPOKEN.

YOU  
LIKE ME,  
YES?

YES...

SEE...I  
KNEW YOU DID.  
WOULD YOU LIKE  
TO BE WITH ME?  
*PHYSICALLY?*

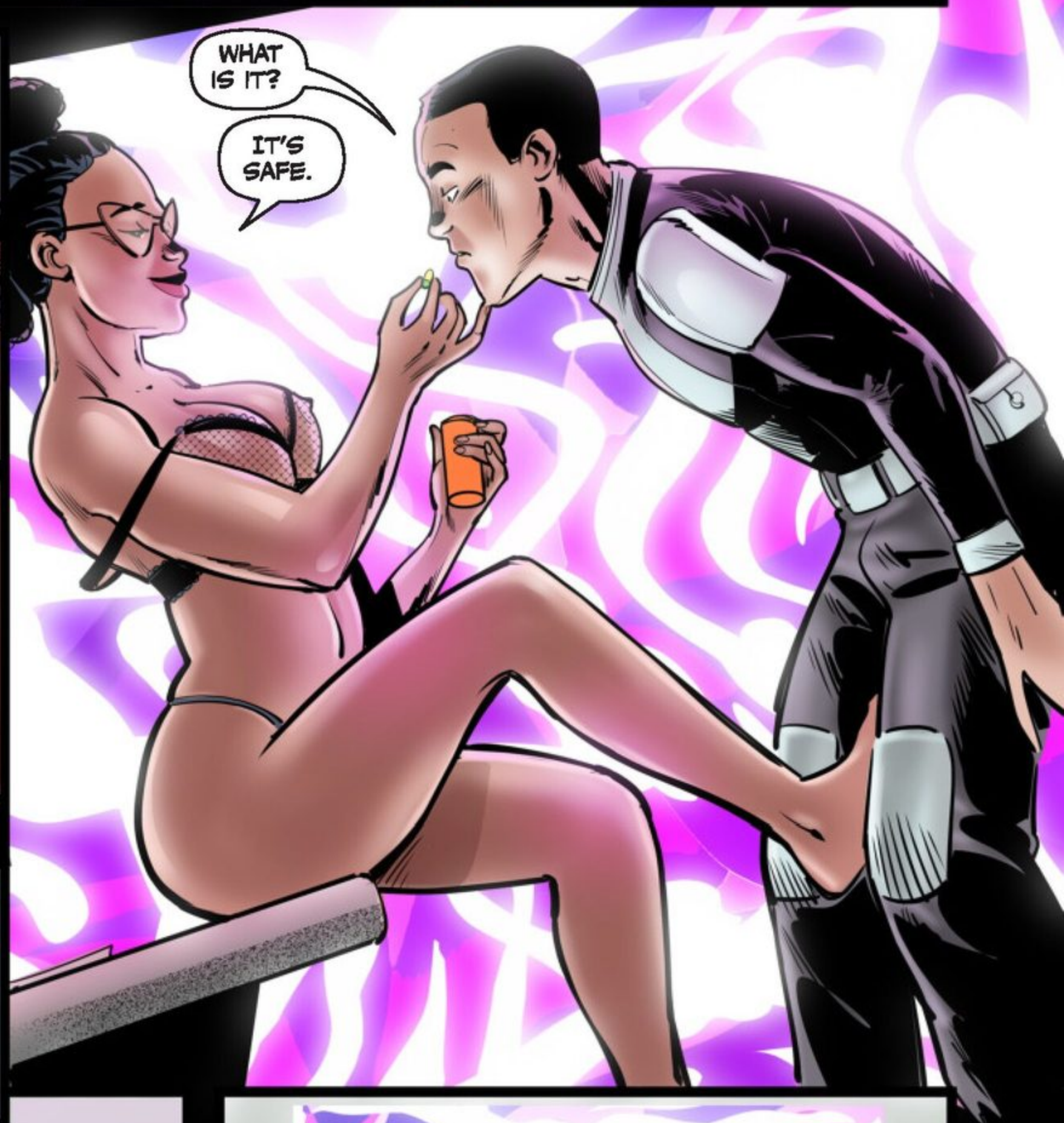




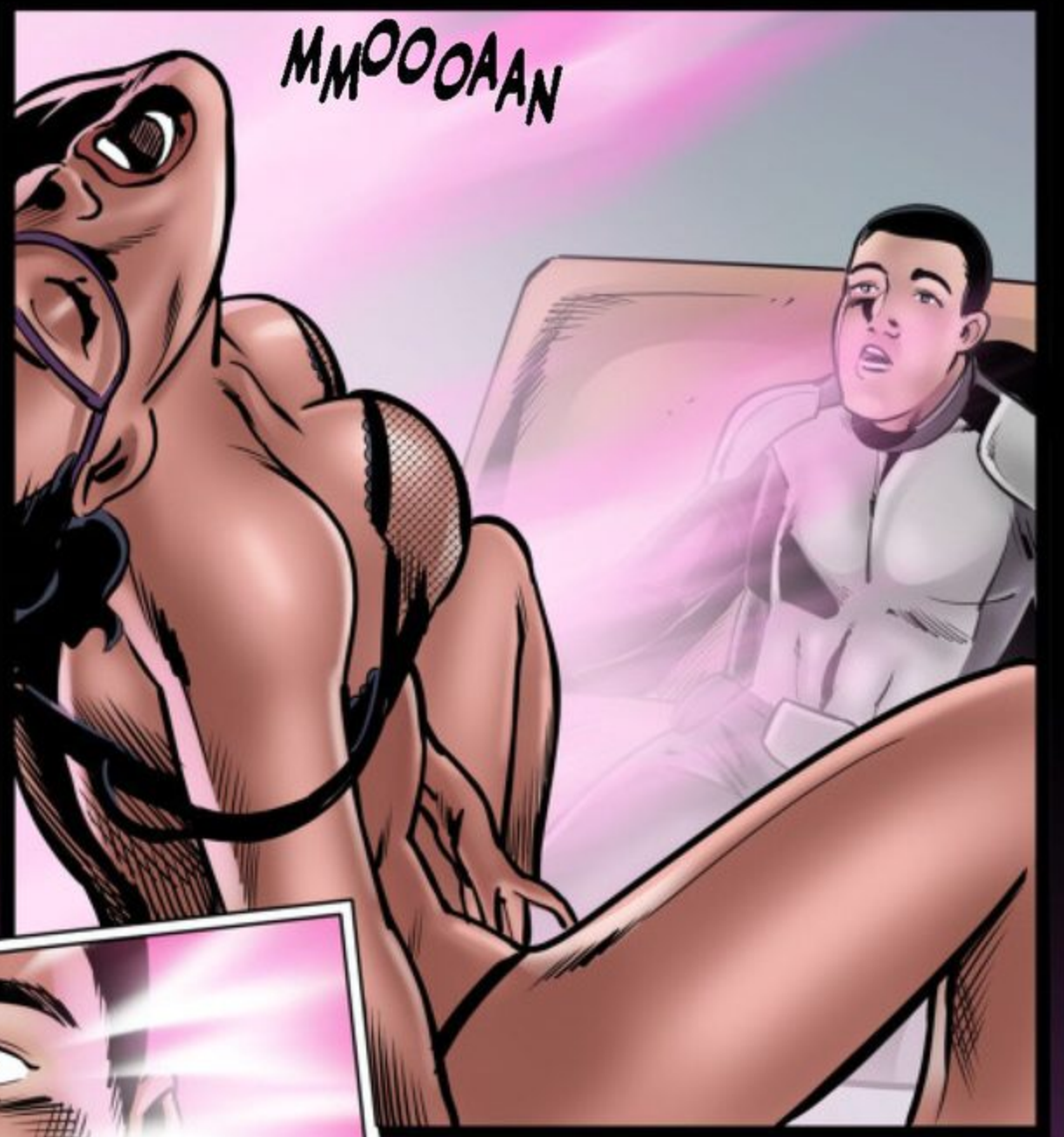




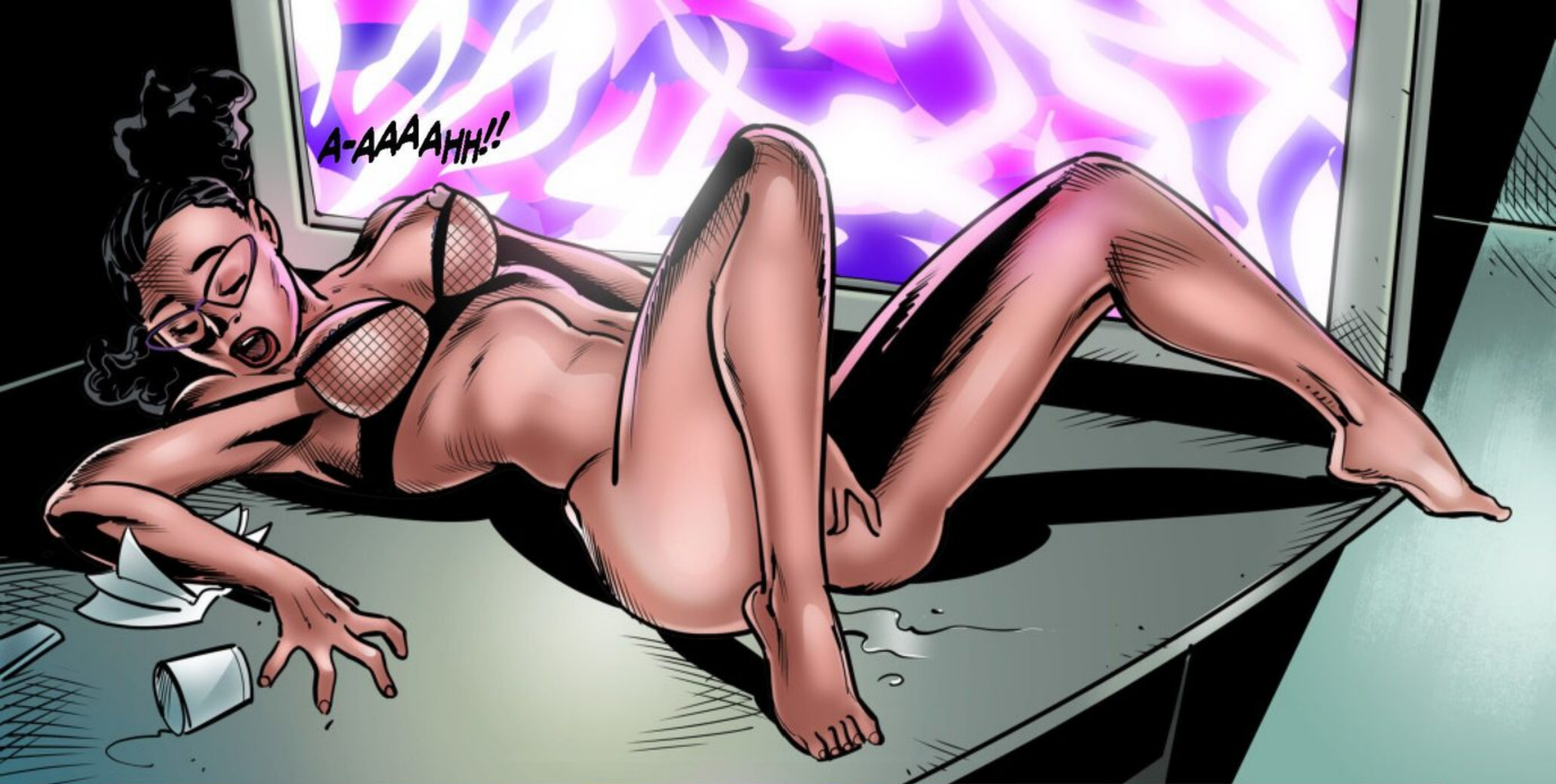




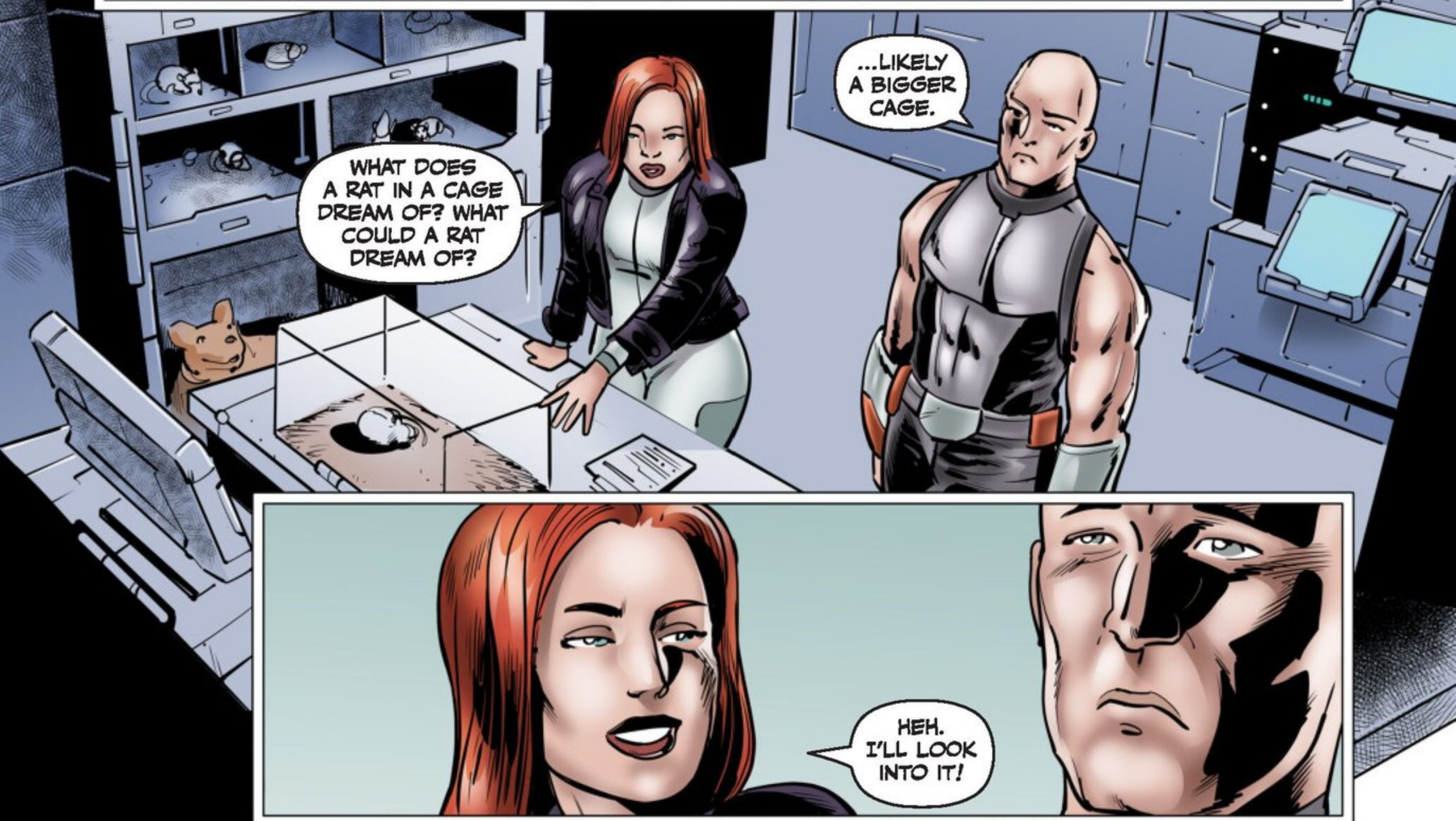




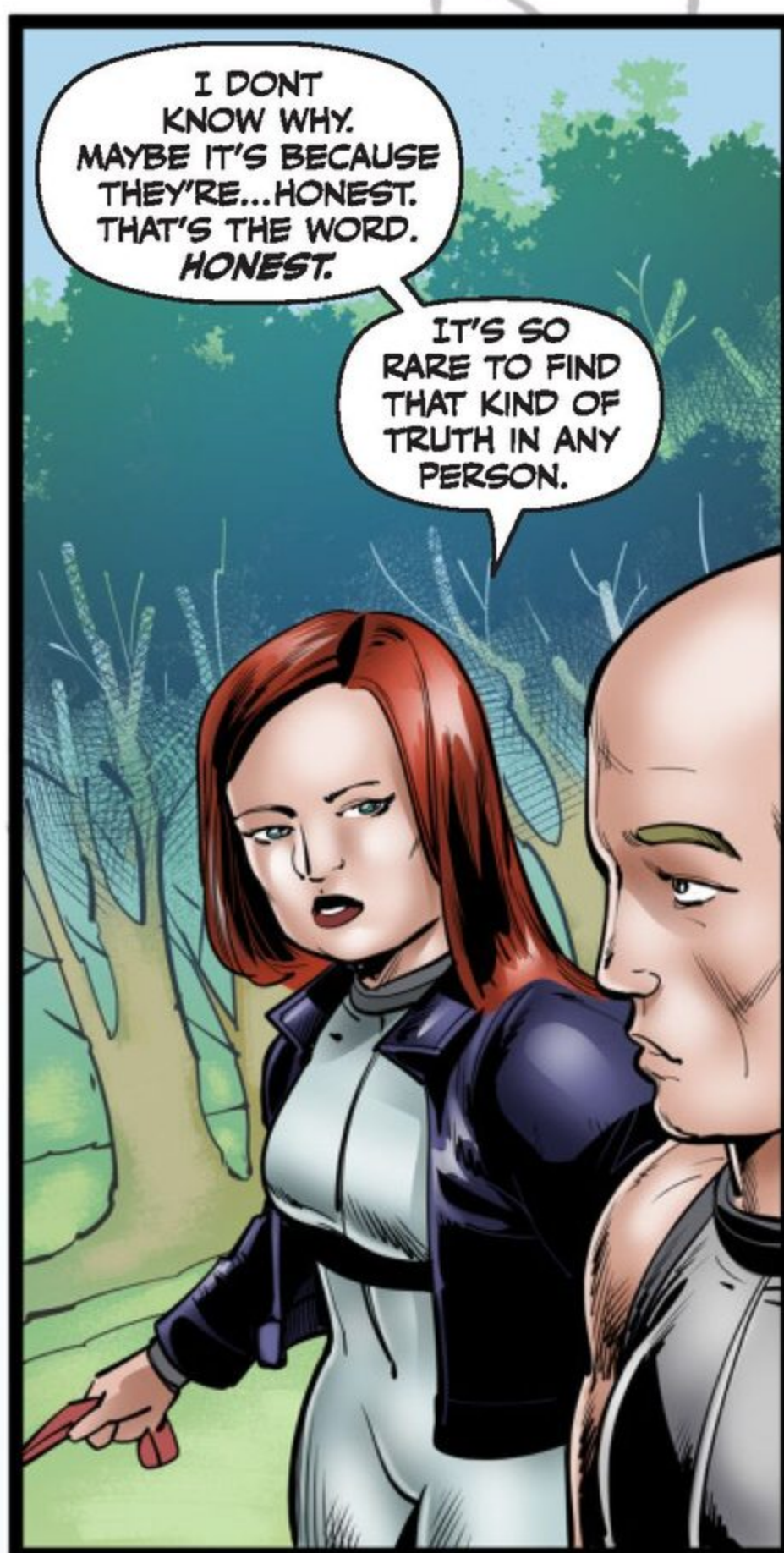
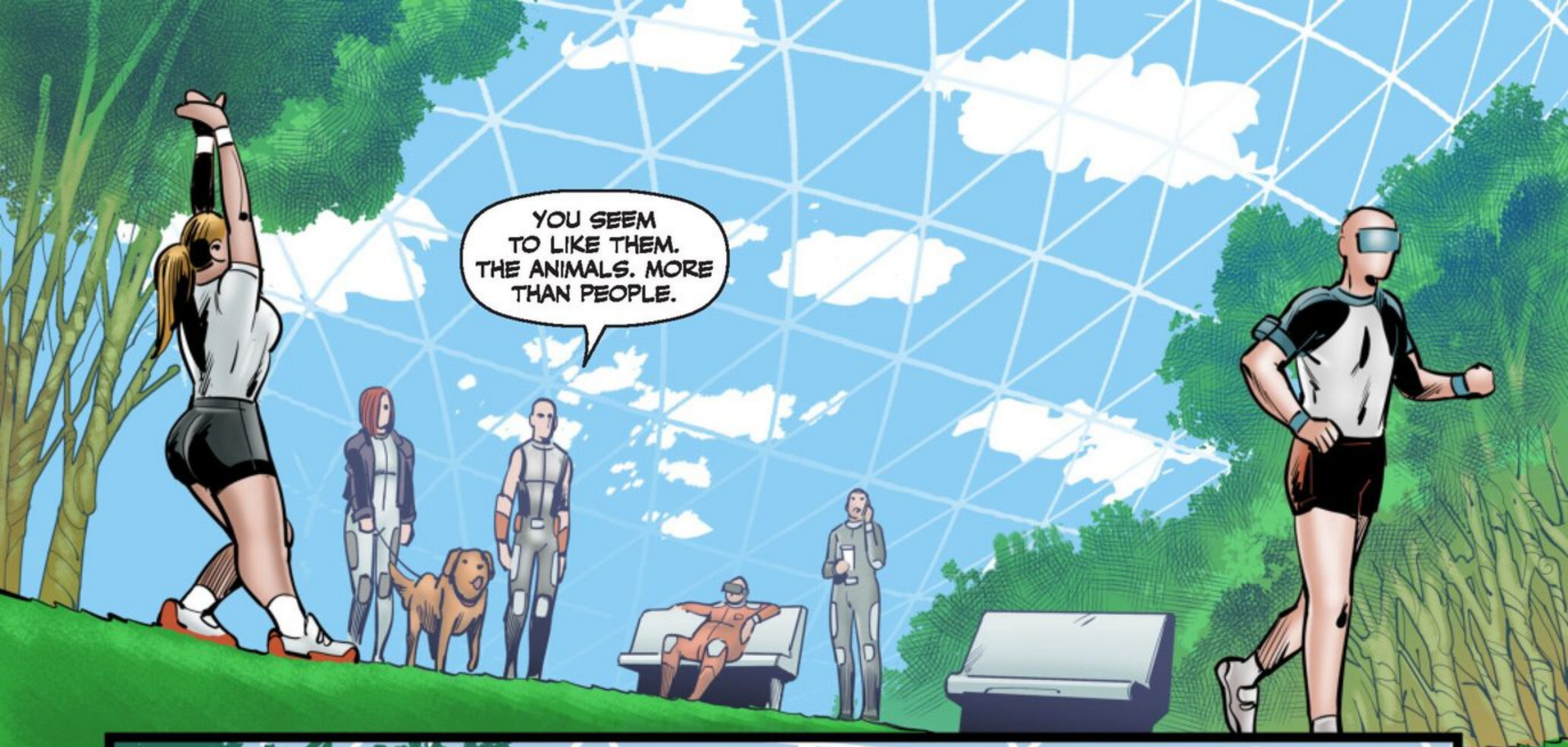








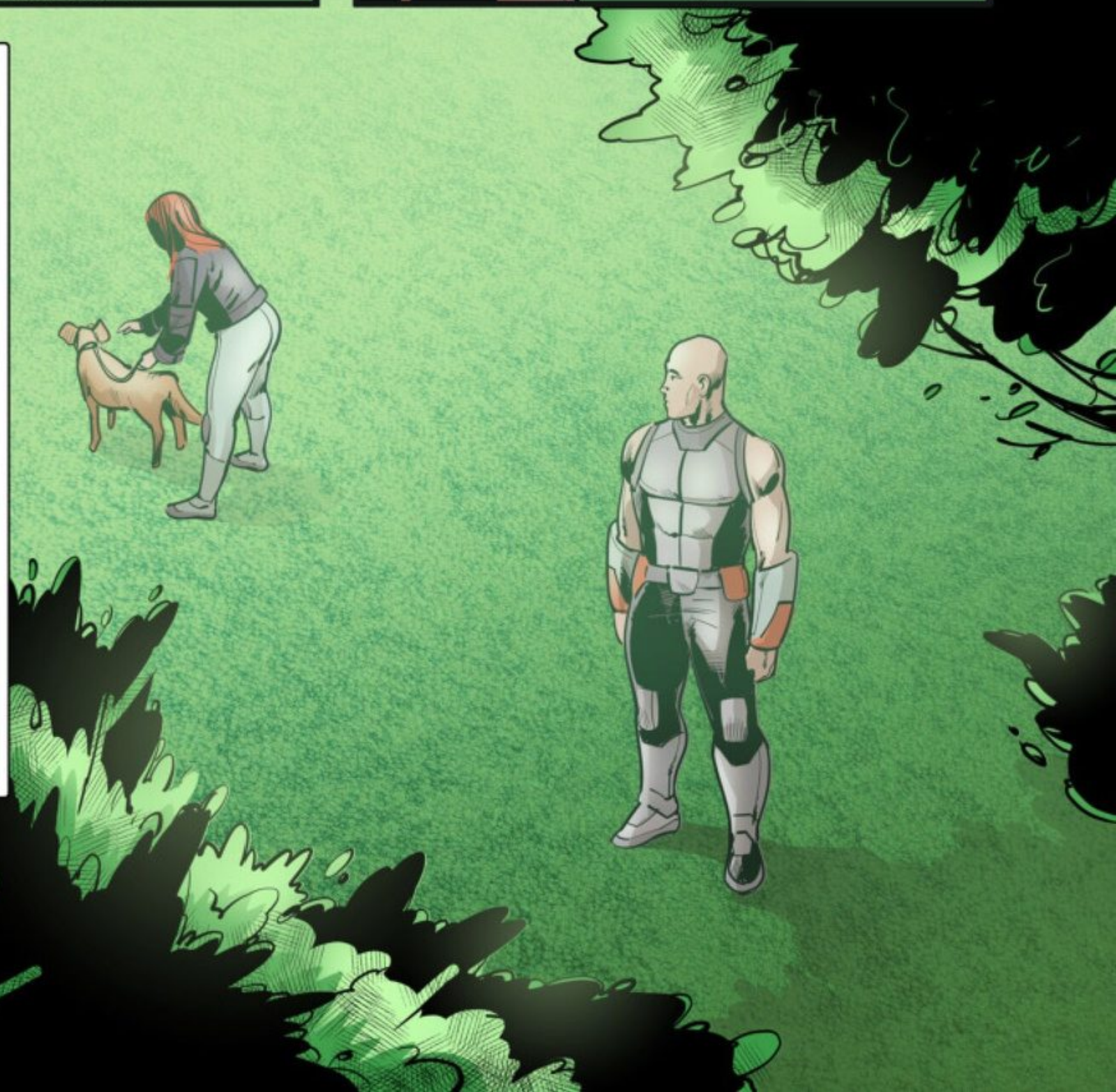




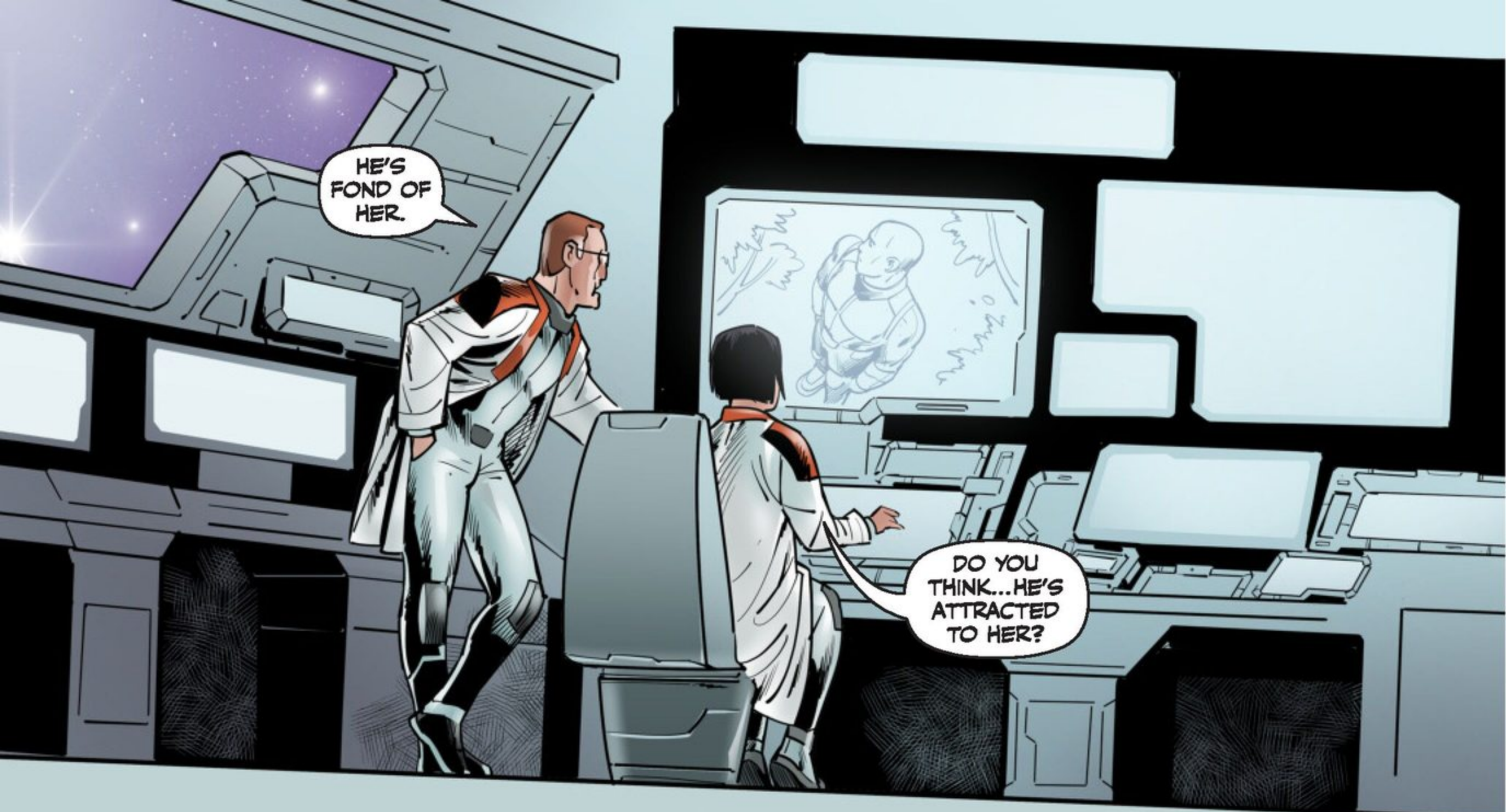












HE'S  
FOND OF  
HER.

DO YOU  
THINK...HE'S  
ATTRACTED  
TO HER?



SHE IS  
VERY ATTRACTIVE...  
IN THAT UNASSUMING  
WAY. BUT NO, I DON'T  
THINK SO.



ARE YOU  
SURE?

WE  
CAN NEVER  
BE QUITE  
SURE.

THERE ARE  
THE SECRETS  
WE KEEP FROM  
OTHERS.

AND THEN  
THERE ARE THE  
SECRETS WE  
KEEP FROM  
OURSELVES.



THIS,  
HOWEVER, IS AS  
PURE OF A PERSON  
THAT WILL EVER  
BE.

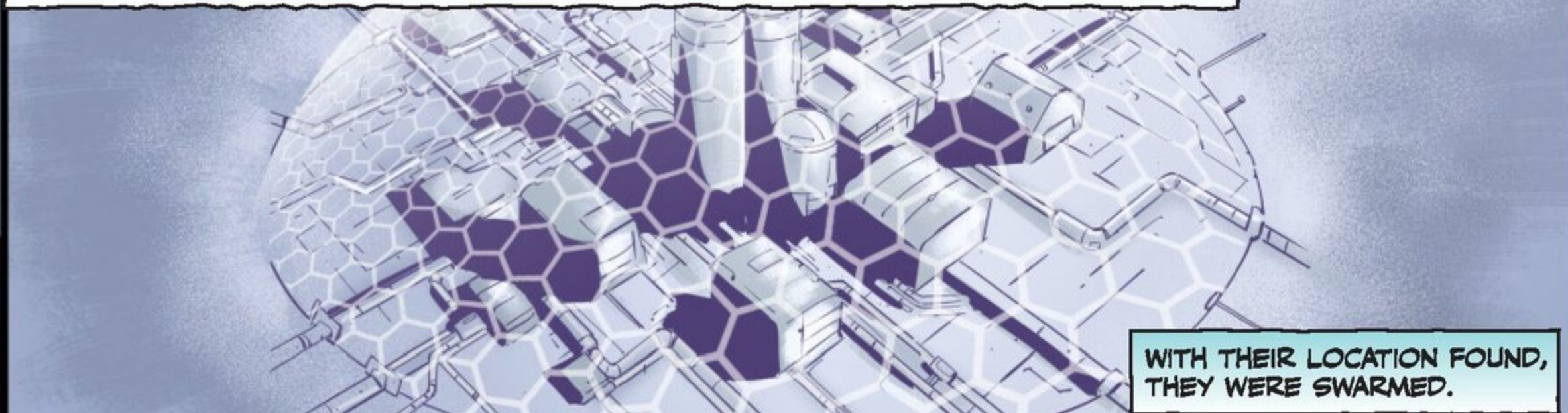




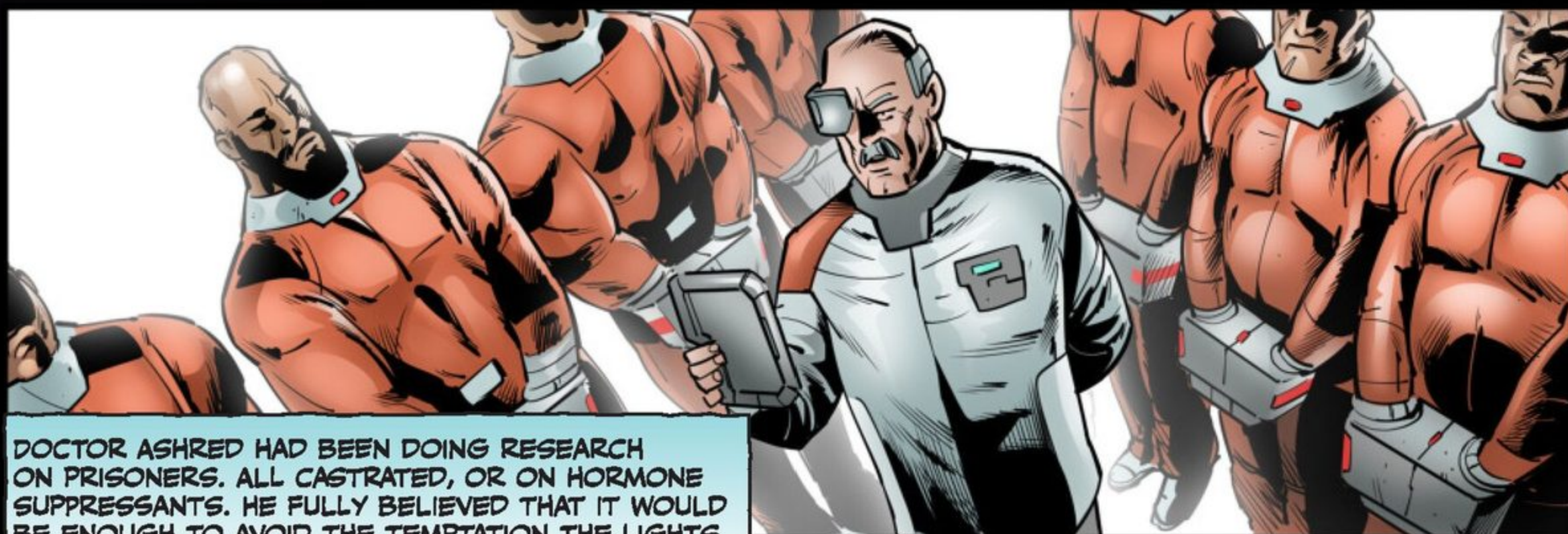
WHY GO THROUGH THE YEARS OF DEVELOPING HIM? WOULDN'T IT BE BETTER TO JUST CASTRATE SOME VOLUNTEERS?

I NEVER TOLD YOU ABOUT PROJECT NARSES?

THE PLANET OF KAVAN WAS ONE OF THE FURTHEST SETTLED, AND CONTACT HAD ALWAYS BEEN INCONSISTENT. WE WERE UNABLE TO WARN THEM HOW TO ISOLATE THE INVADERS FROM THE SIGNALS, ONCE THEY REESTABLISHED CONTACT WITH ONE OF EARTH'S SATELLITES THAT HAD BEEN CORRUPTED.



WITH THEIR LOCATION FOUND, THEY WERE SWARMED.



DOCTOR ASHRED HAD BEEN DOING RESEARCH ON PRISONERS. ALL CASTRATED, OR ON HORMONE SUPPRESSANTS. HE FULLY BELIEVED THAT IT WOULD BE ENOUGH TO AVOID THE TEMPTATION THE LIGHTS USED TO ENTRAP THEIR VICTIMS.



THE PRISONERS WERE DEPLOYED TO SEARCH THE FACILITY AS ASHRED AND THE REMAINDER OF THE RESEARCH TEAM REMAINED IN ORBIT.



"AS SUSPECTED, THE BASE WAS DESERTED. HOWEVER, WE ALSO KNOW THAT WHEREVER THE LIGHTS HAVE BEEN, THEY LEAVE SOME SORT OF IMPRESSION. WE DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT MUCH EITHER..."



BUT IT'S LIKE THEY LEAVE WEB STRANDS WHEREVER THEY GO. AND WHEN THAT STRAND IS DISTURBED, THEY COME BACK..

IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR THE LIGHTS TO RETURN.



WHAT HAPPENED NEXT WAS RECORDED FROM THE SHIP, SAFELY ISOLATING ANY TRACES THAT COULD HAVE LED THE LIGHTS TO HIM.

BUT THE PRISONERS....THEY WERE STILL TEMPTED. AND IN SOME CASES, EVEN CHANGED.



GIVING THEM *BODY PARTS* THEY'D LOST. OR PARTS THEY'D ALWAYS WANTED.

UNGH!



ALL THEIR WANTS GIVEN, BUT NOT WITHOUT COST."



EVERYONE WAS TAKEN WHILE DOCTOR ASHRED WATCHED ALL OF THIS SAFELY FROM HIS SHIP, ITS SIGNALS SAFELY HIDDEN.

WHERE IS HE NOW?

HE'S BACK TO HIS RESEARCH. THERE'LL ALWAYS BE PRISONS.

EVERYONE WAS TAKEN WHILE DOCTOR ASHRED WATCHED ALL OF THIS SAFELY FROM HIS SHIP, ITS SIGNALS SAFELY HIDDEN.

WHERE IS HE NOW?

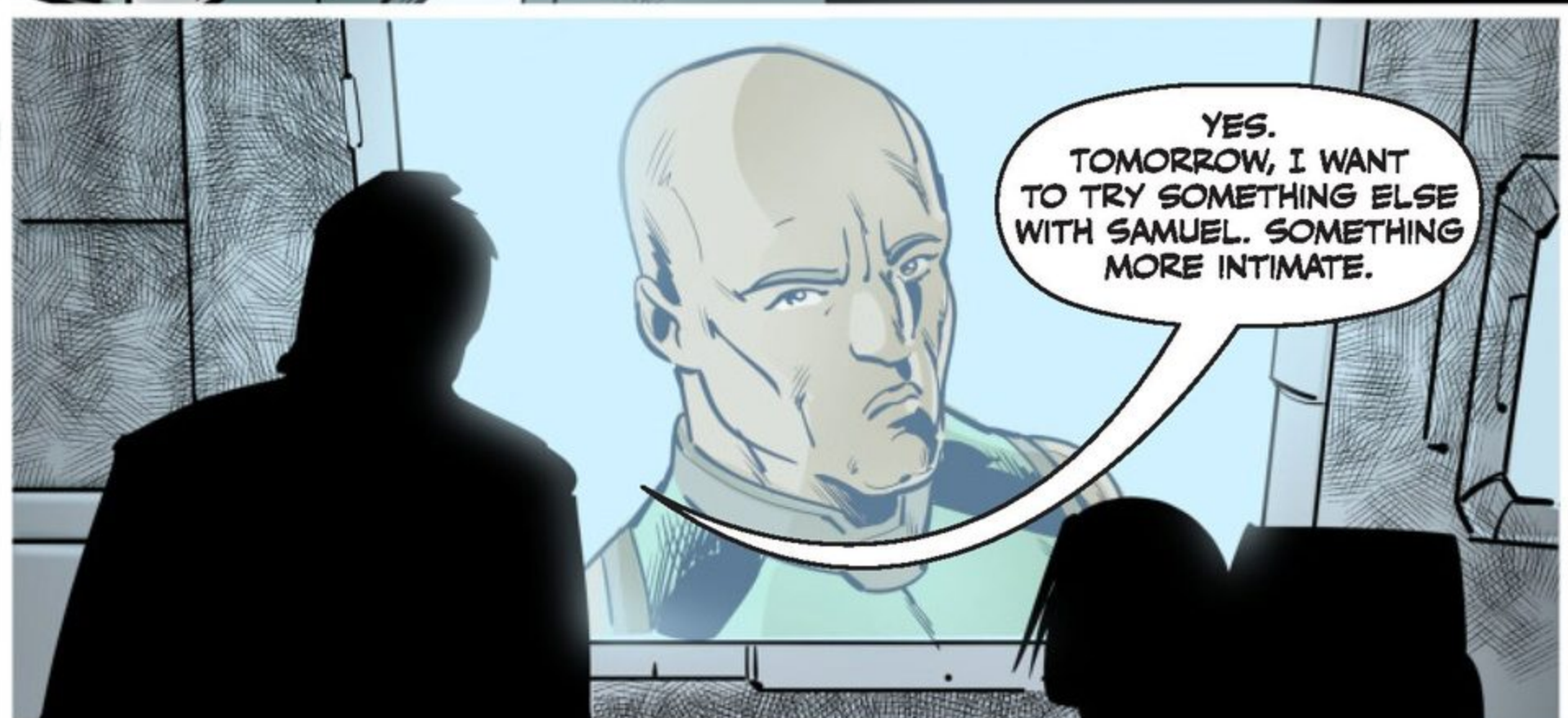
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WHERE IS HE NOW?

HE'S BACK TO HIS RESEARCH. THERE'LL ALWAYS BE PRISONS.







THE NEXT DAY.

KNOCK!  
KNOCK!

HEY, JUST  
WANTED TO KNOW  
IF YOU'D LIKE TO GO  
TO THE PARK WITH ME  
AND BEN TODAY?

I WOULD,  
BUT I WAS JUST  
LEAVING. DOCTOR  
FORTNER NEEDS  
ME.

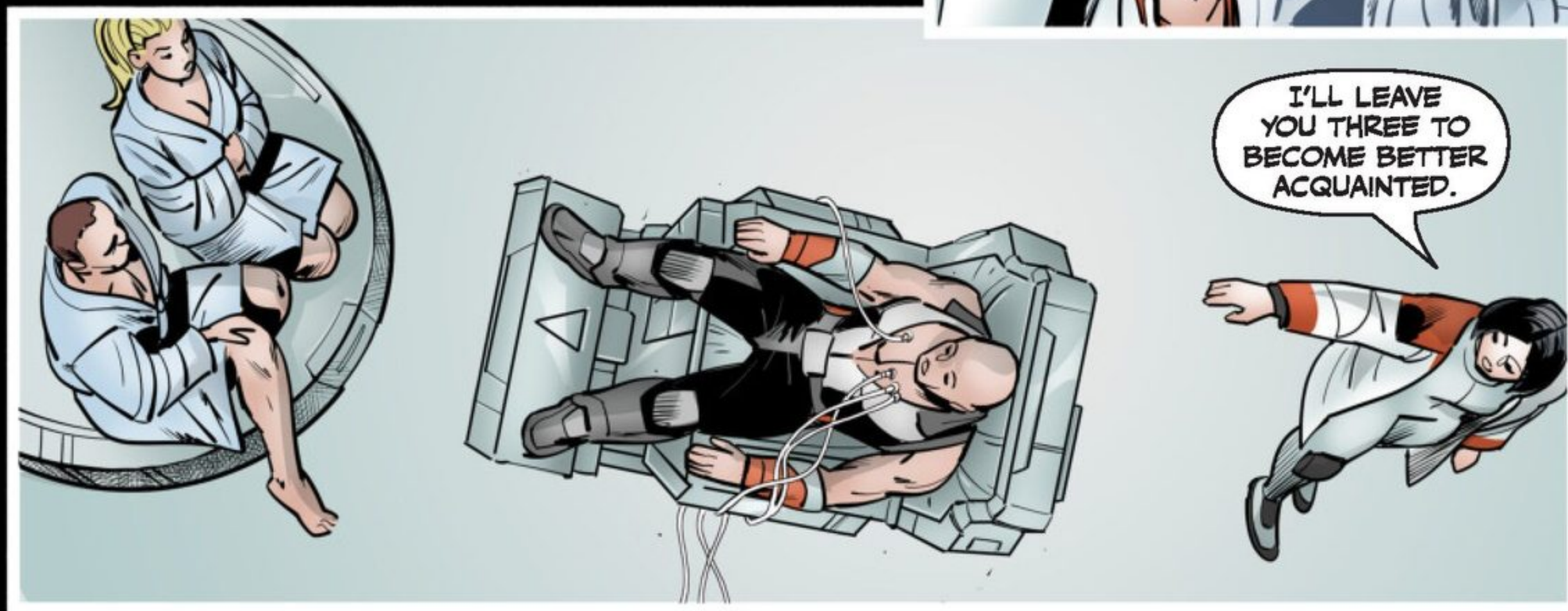
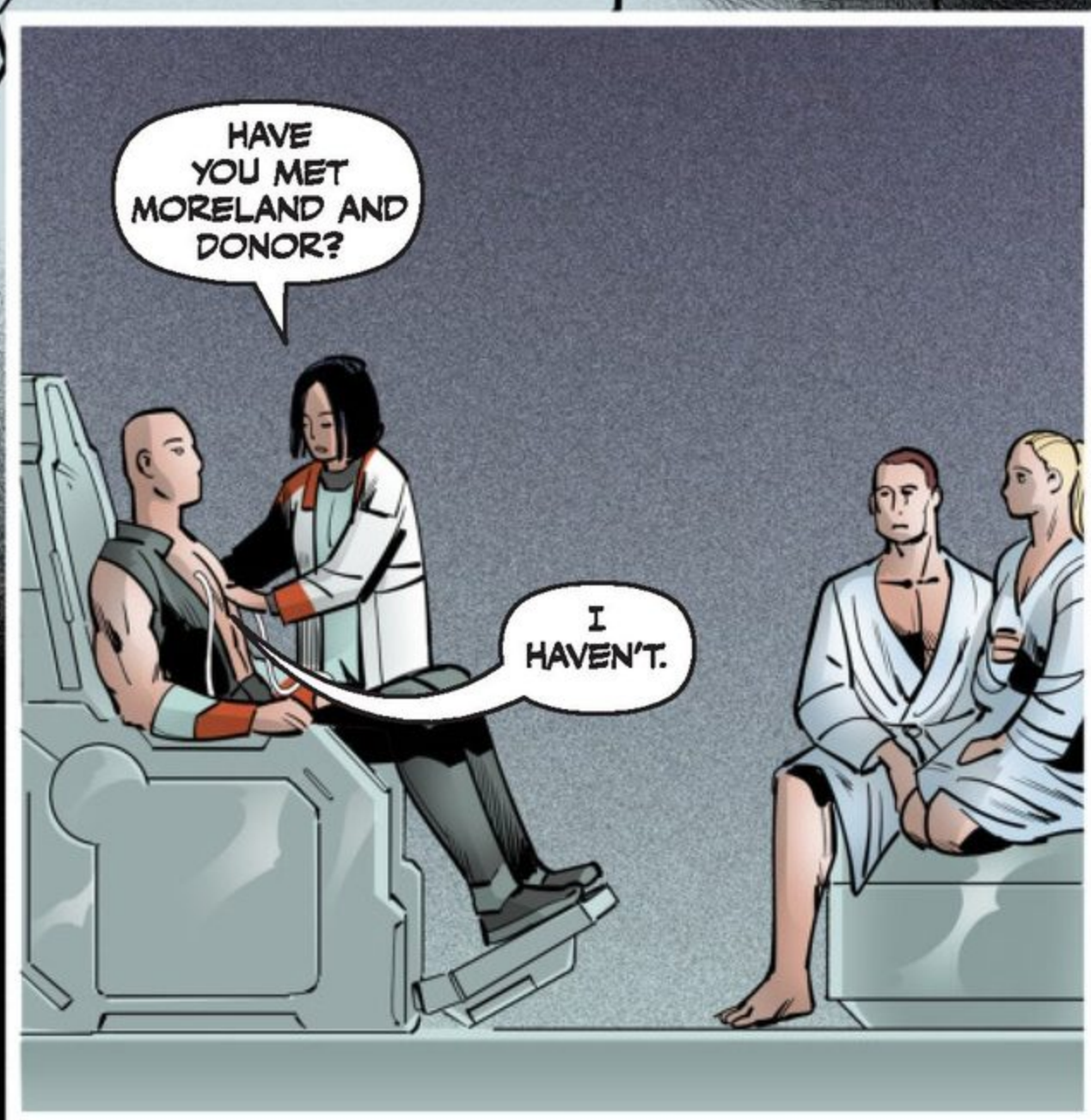
ALREADY?  
THAT'S ODD, DON'T  
YOU THINK? YOU JUST  
HAD A VISIT.

UNUSUAL,  
YES. MAYBE I WILL  
RUN INTO YOU  
AFTERWARD.

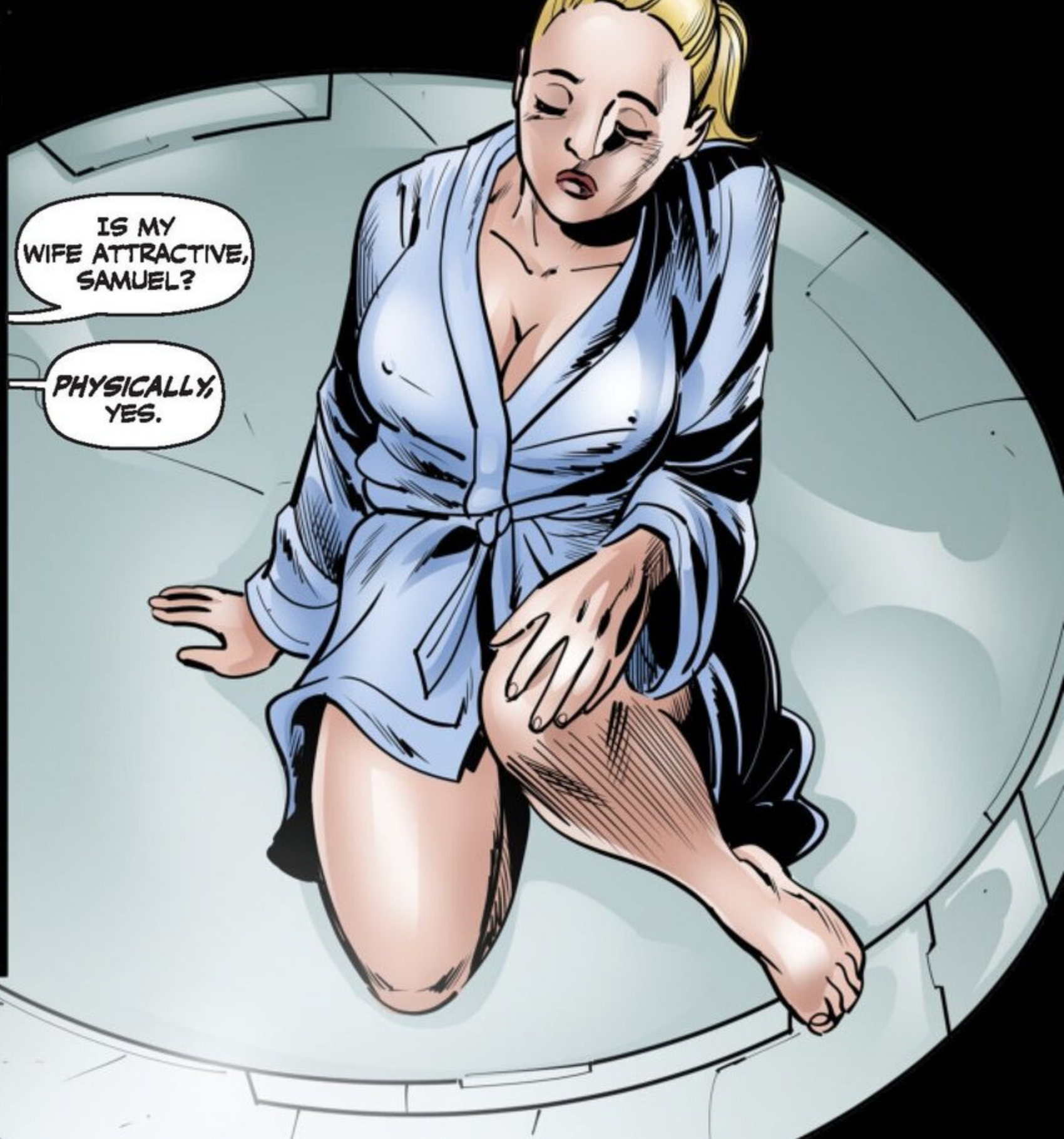
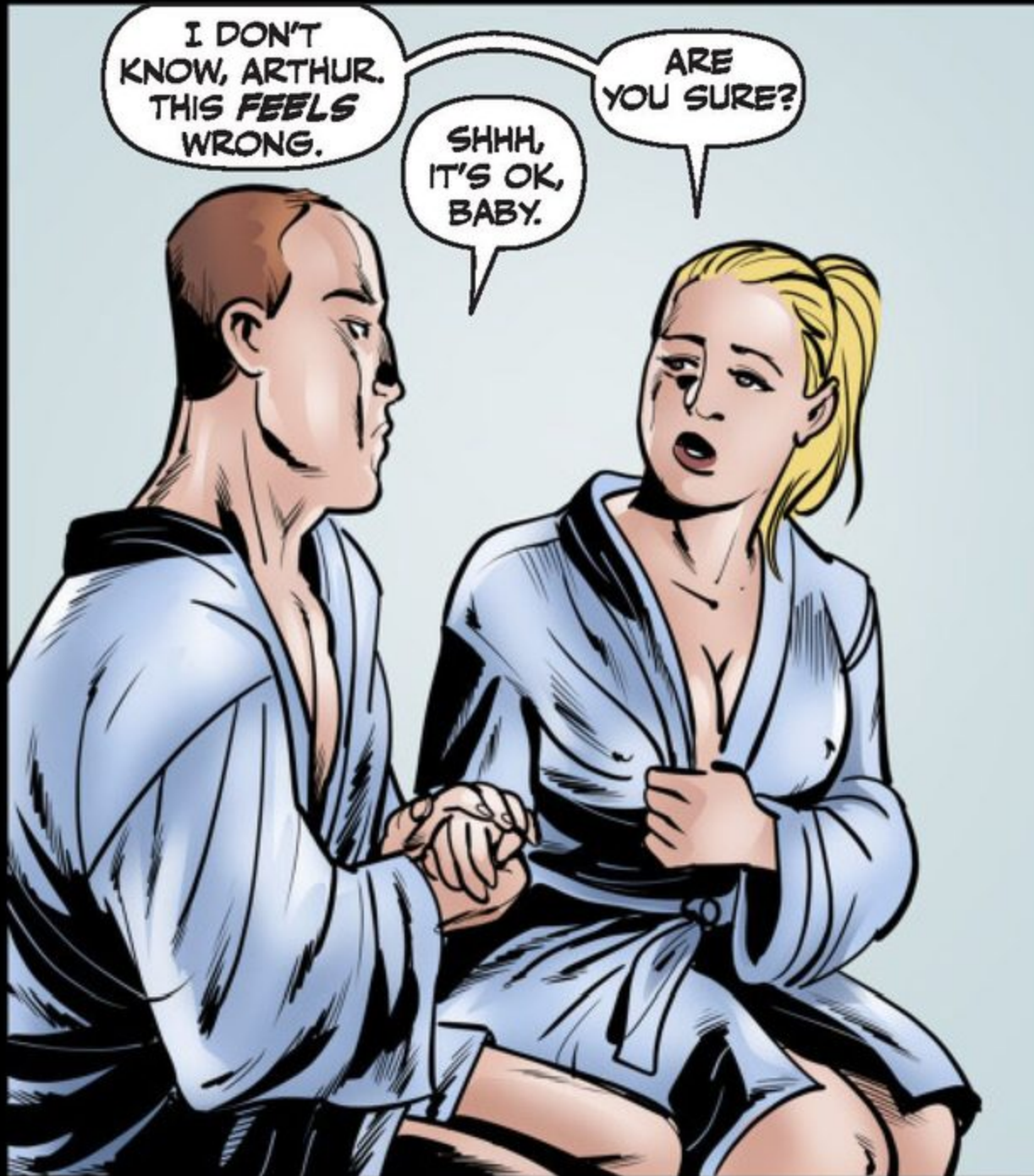
...DO  
ME A  
FAVOR?

REMIND  
THEM YOU'RE  
MORE THAN THEIR  
PROJECT. YOU ARE  
MUCH MORE.

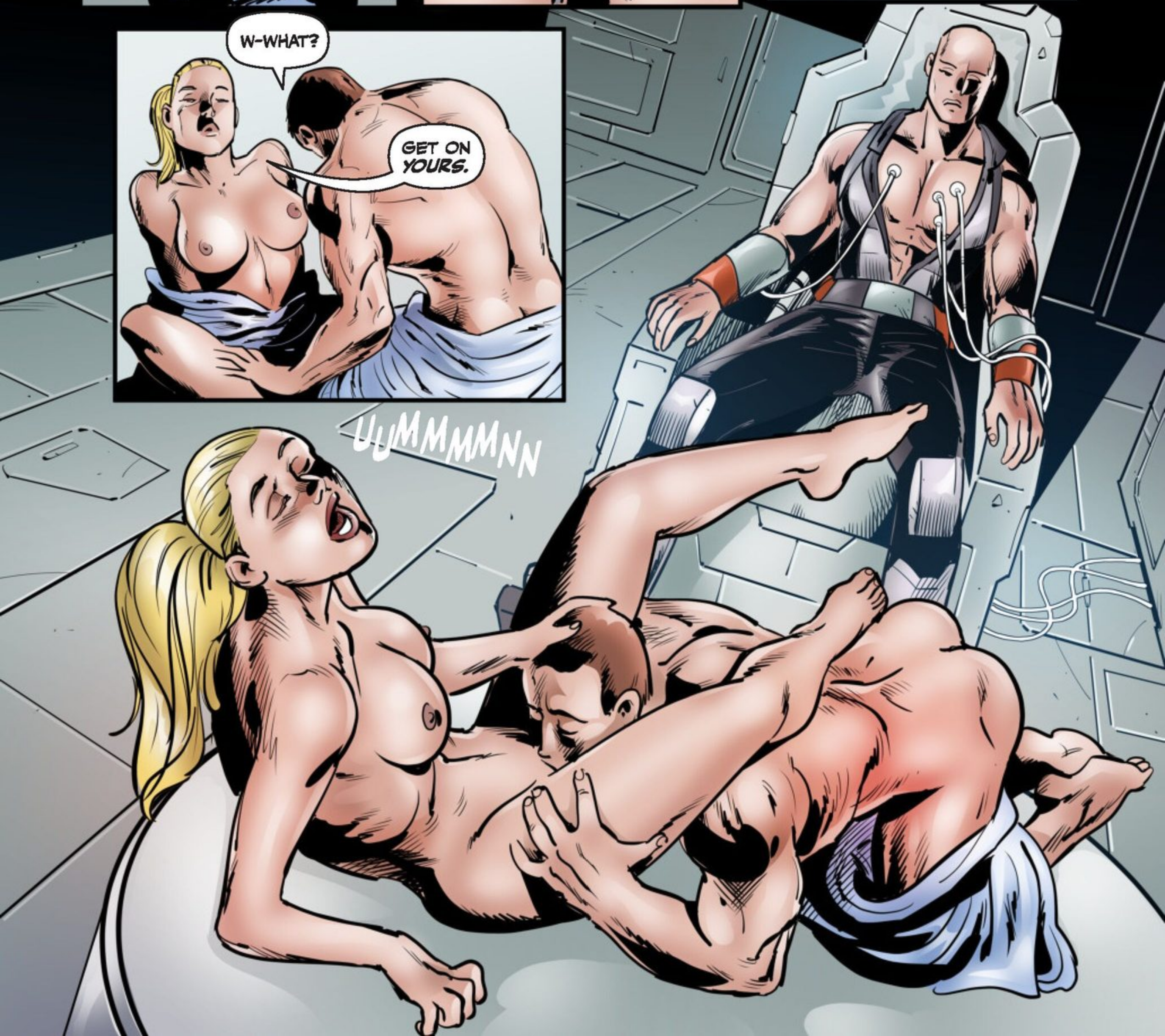
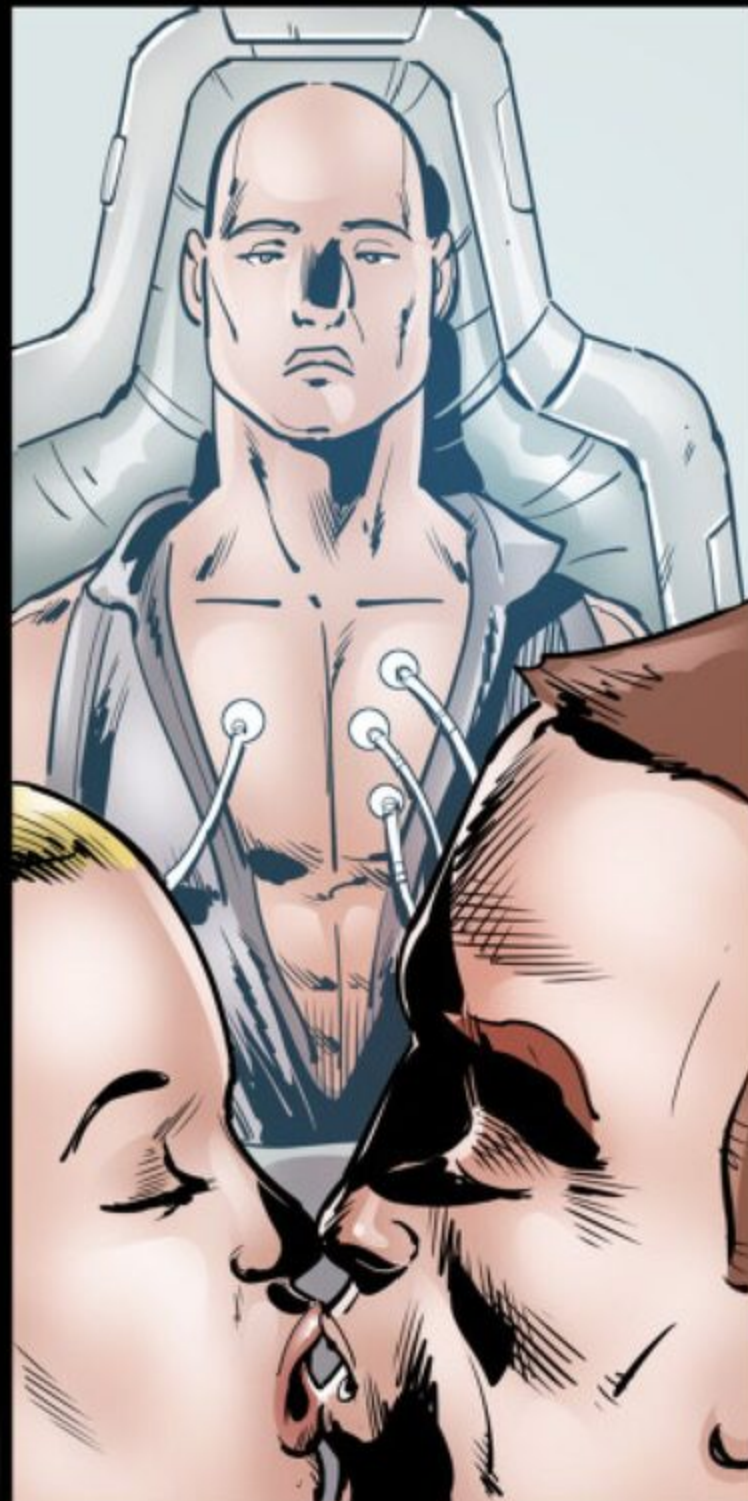




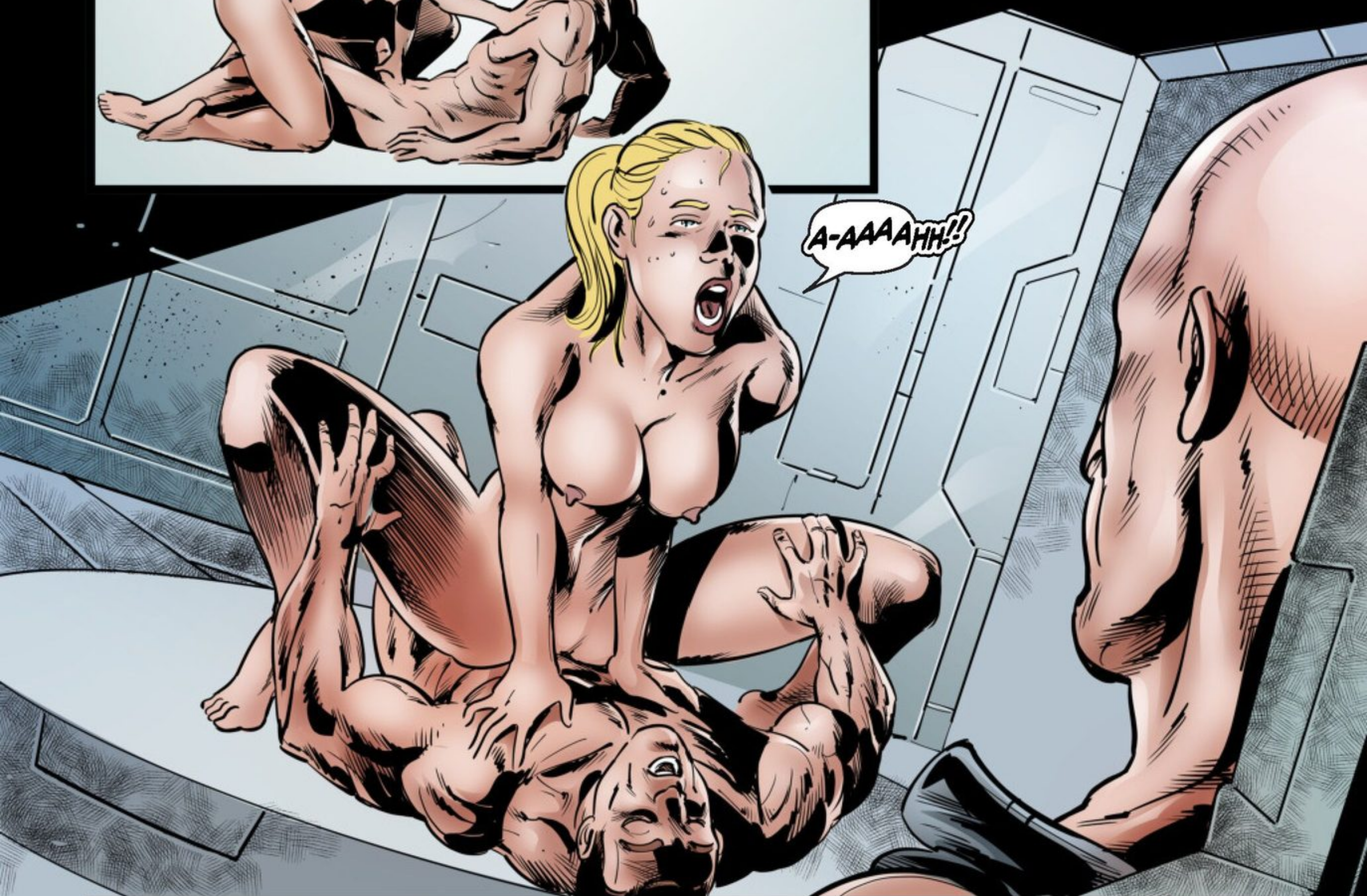
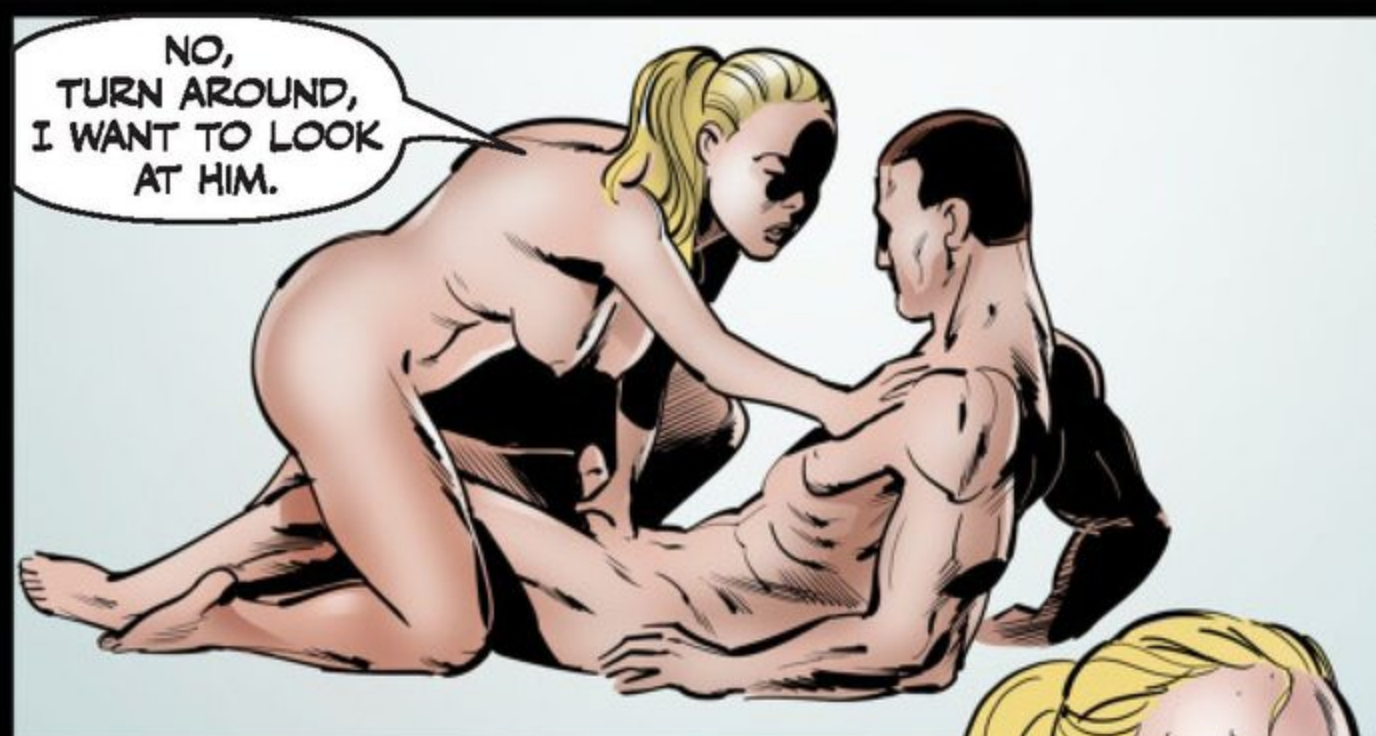




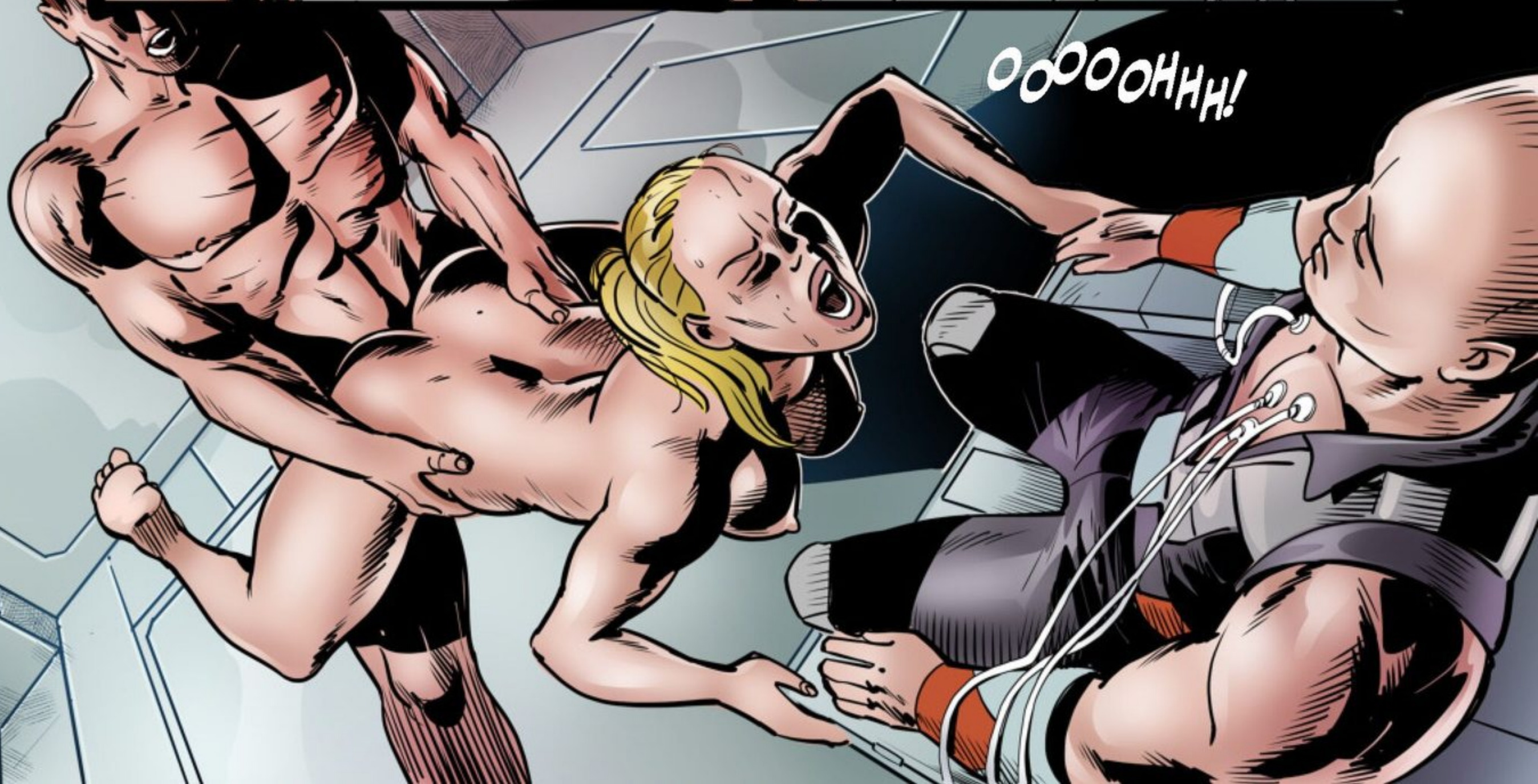








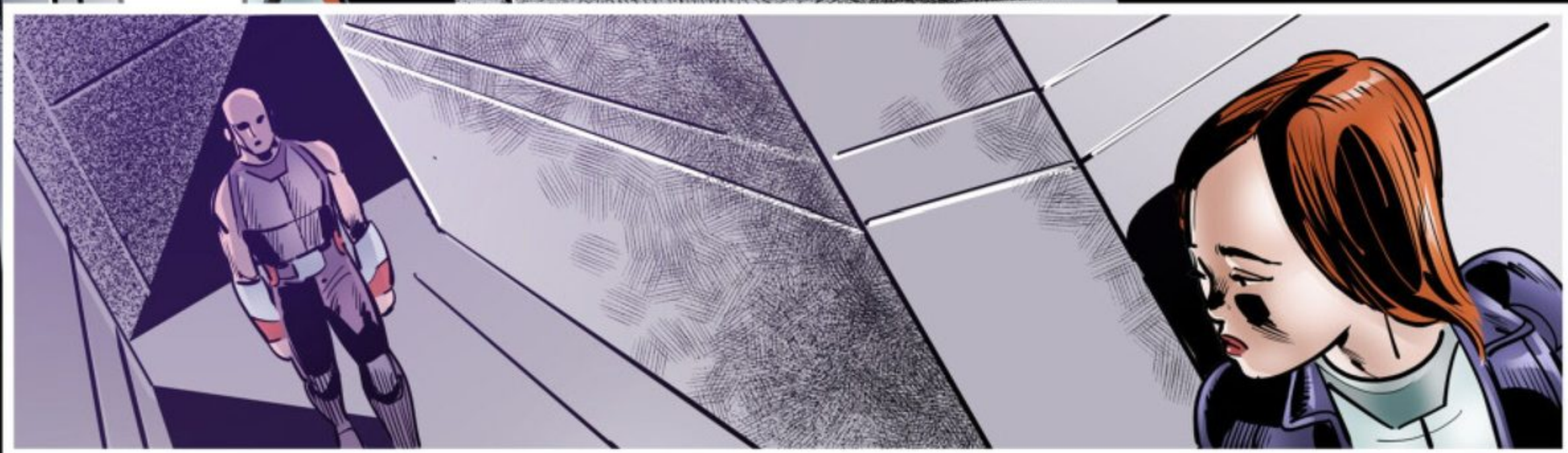




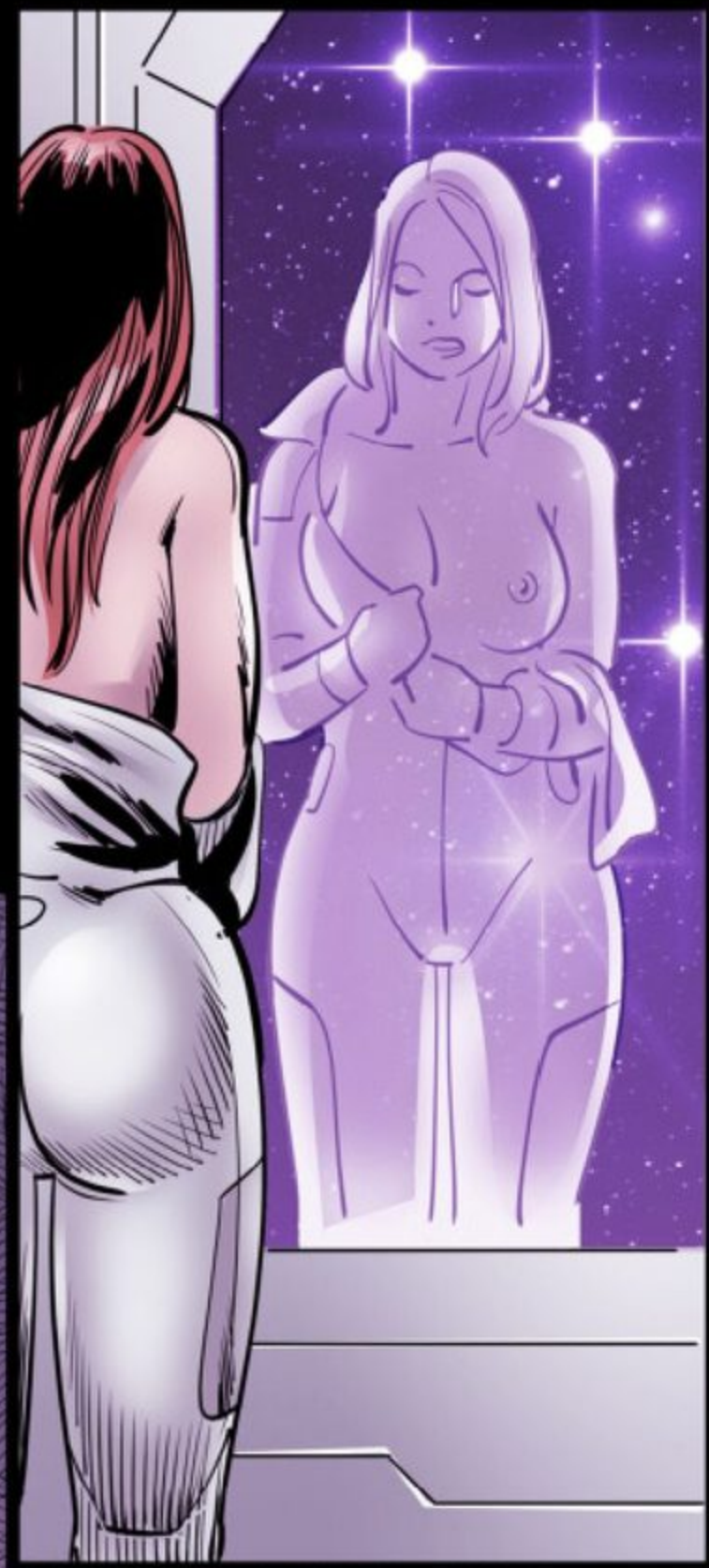




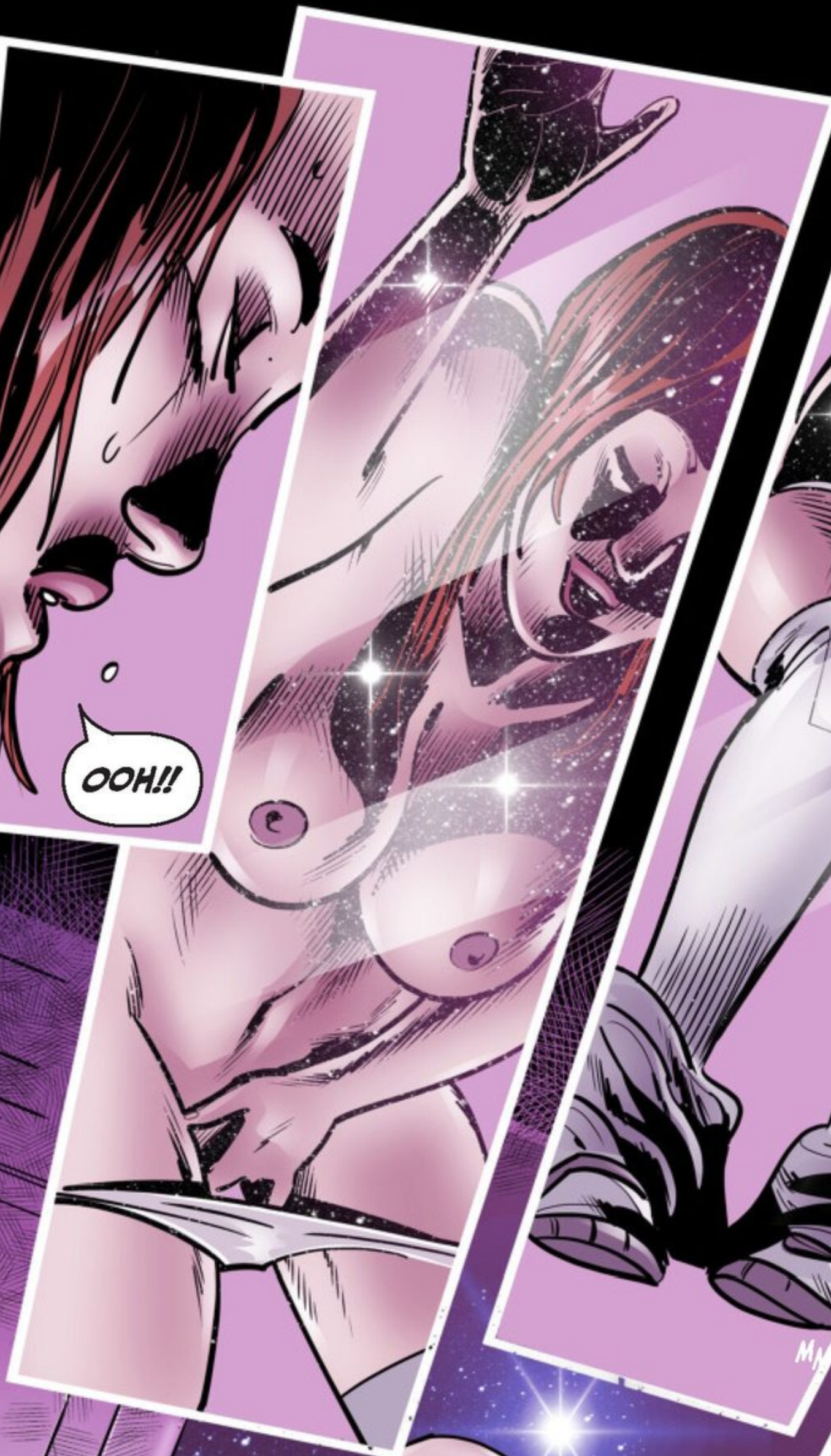














THE NEXT DAY.

SAMUEL,  
WAIT UP!

GOOD  
MORNING,  
PAGE.

ARE YOU  
FEELING  
OK?

I  
HAVEN'T SEEN  
YOU FOR A  
FEW DAYS.

UM, YEAH.  
I'M FINE. SO...ARE  
YOU READY TO  
SEE IT?

MOST  
OF THE CREW...  
THEY APPEAR  
NERVOUS.









A full-page illustration from a manga or anime. Three mechs, resembling Gundam units, are positioned in the lower half of the frame, looking up at a massive, brilliant white light source that appears to be breaking through a dark, swirling nebula. The mechs are grey with some blue and red details. The background is a deep space filled with stars and streaks of purple and blue light. Three speech bubbles are present: one on the left, one on the right, and one at the bottom right.

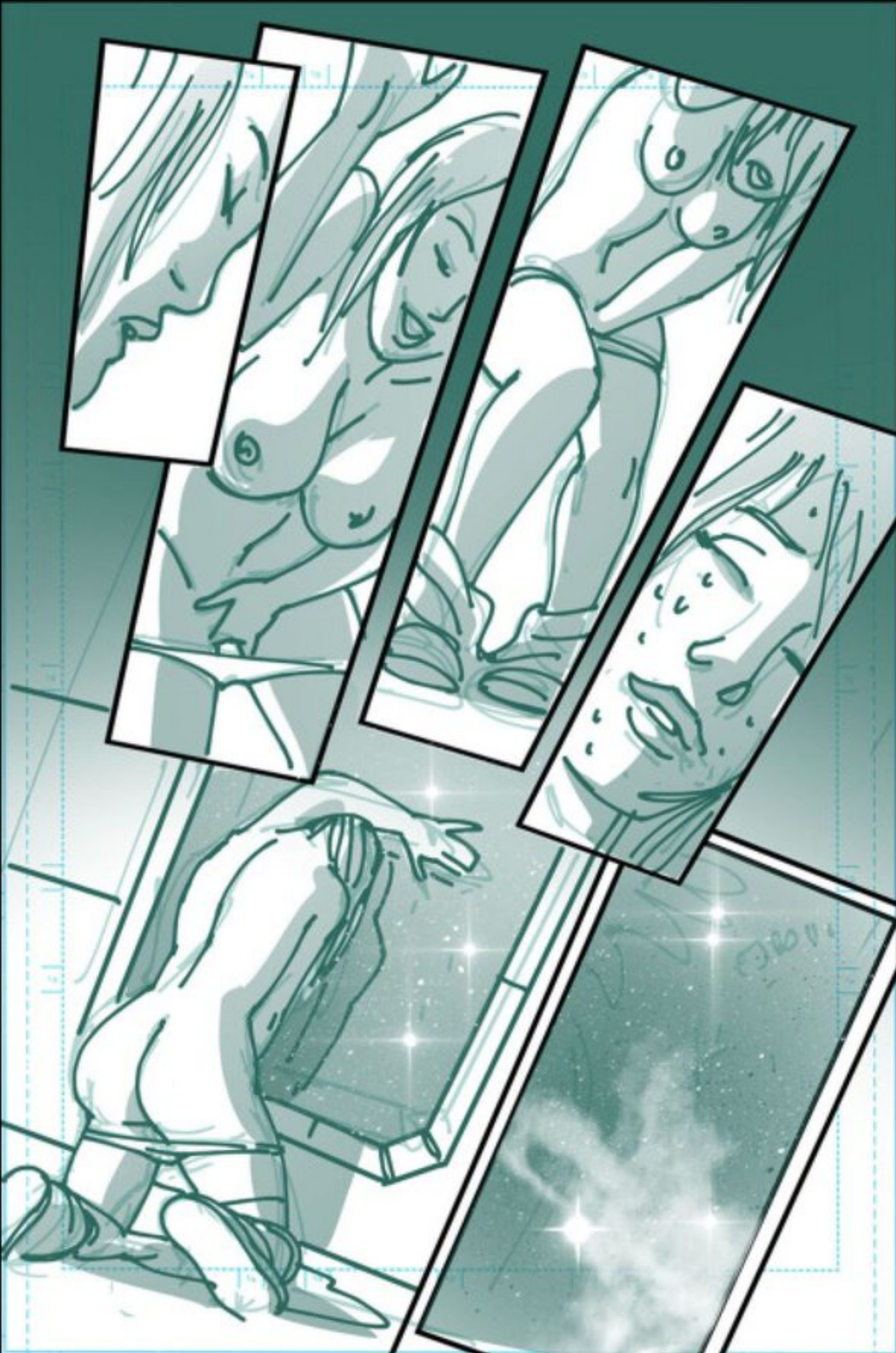
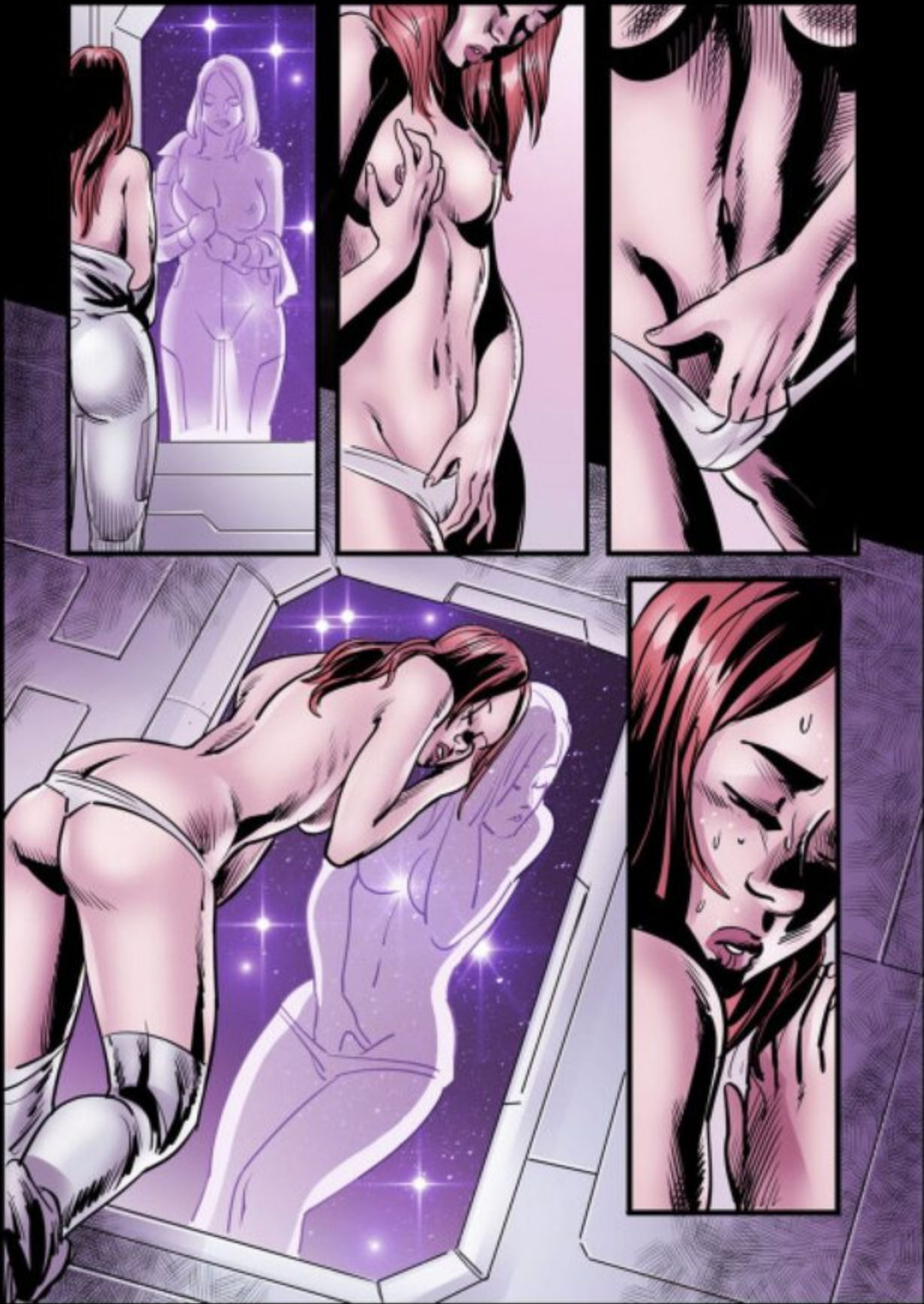
"THE TEAR.

IT'S REAL."

To be continued!



ROUGHS TO FINSH BY EMILIO





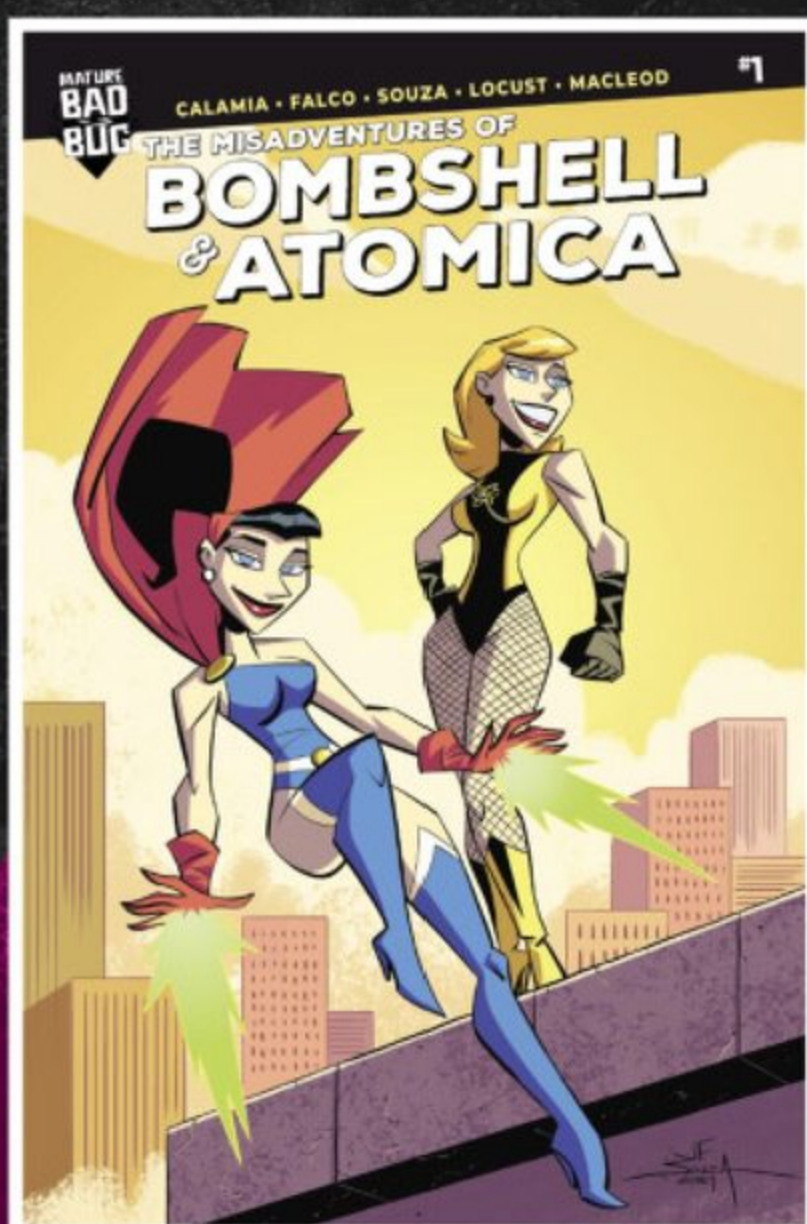
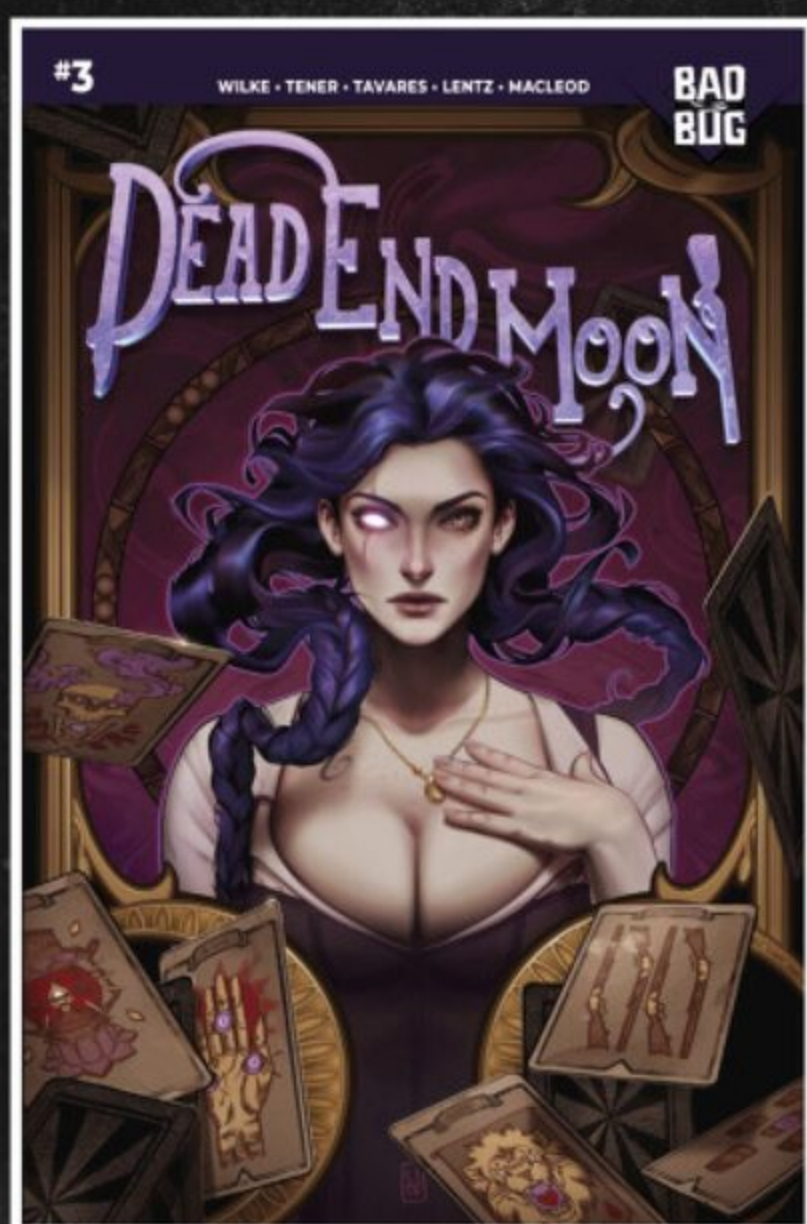
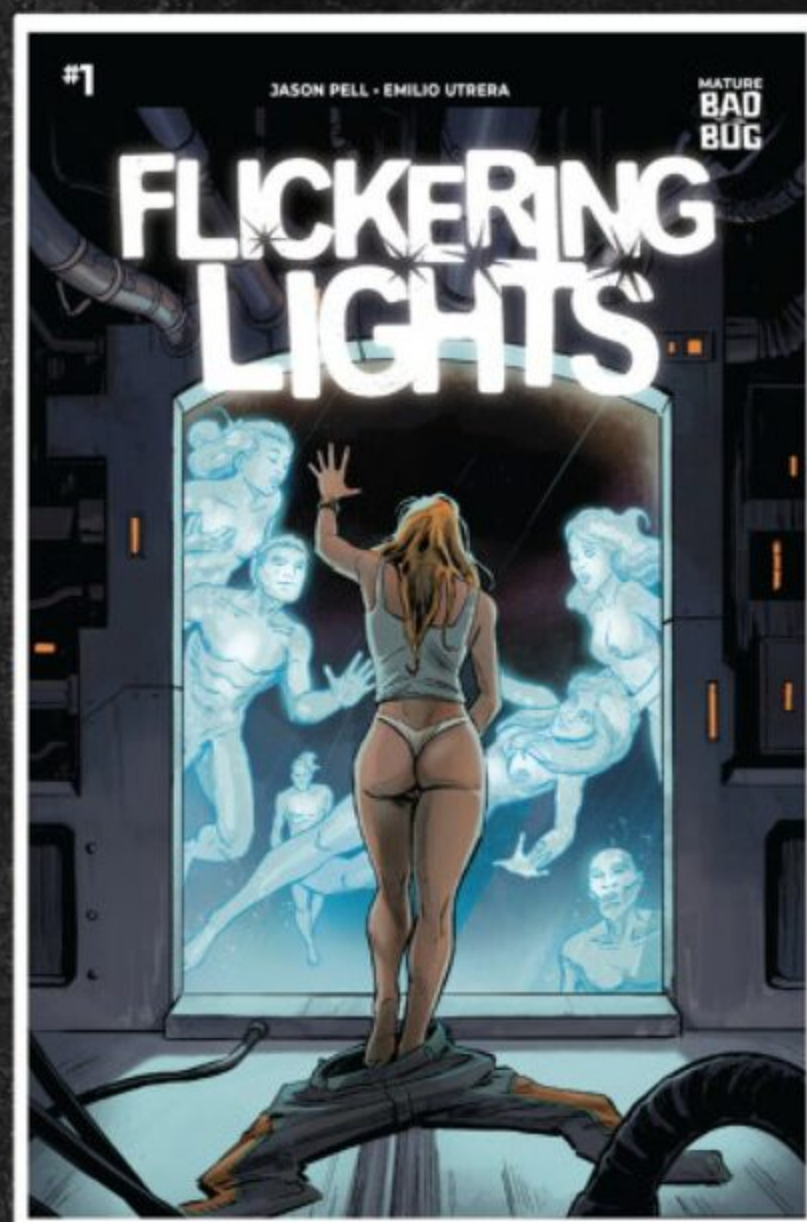
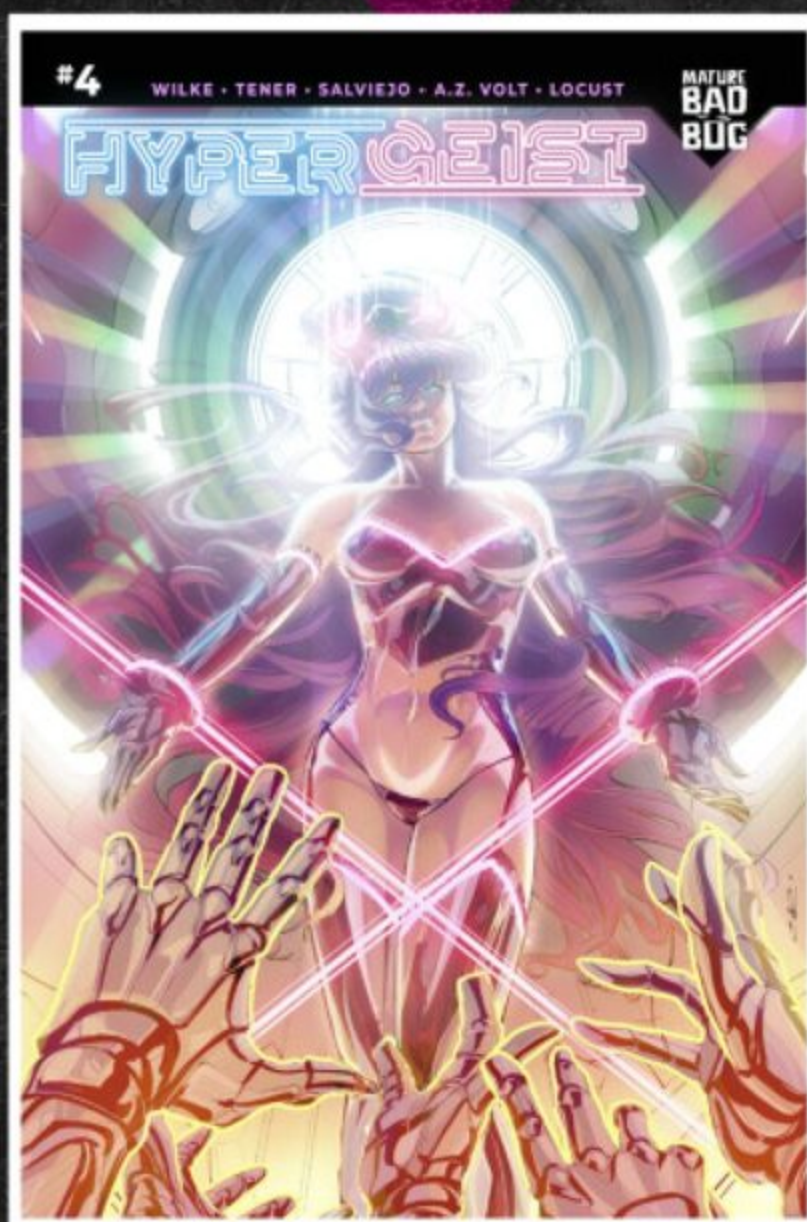


# FLICKERING LIGHTS



# BAD BUG

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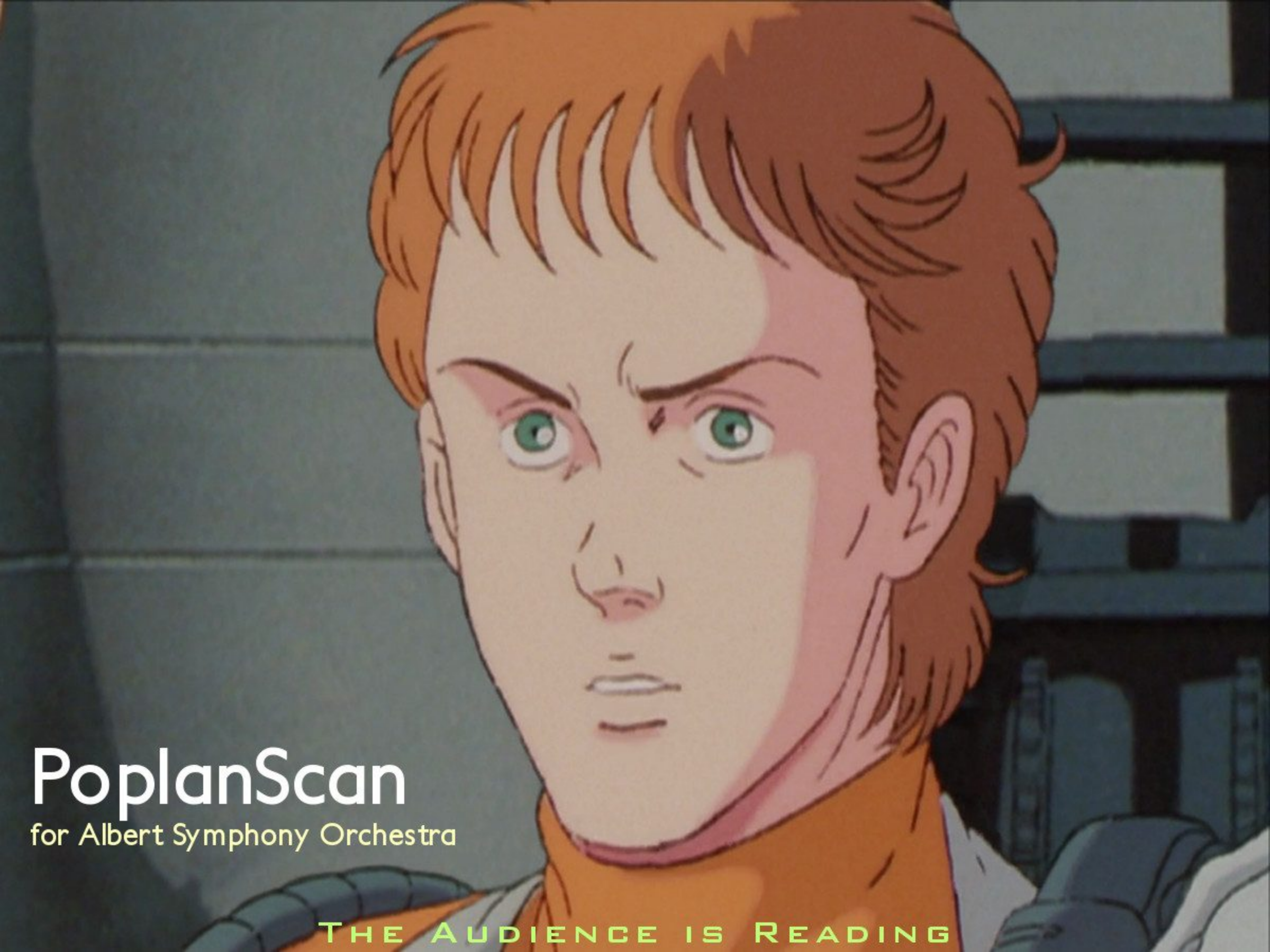






# BAD BUG [MIDNIGHT]





# PoplanScan

for Albert Symphony Orchestra

THE AUDIENCE IS READING